BACK-TO-BACK: Niles volleyball earns 2nd straight district title

Page B1

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Crime Prevention Unit
919 Port Street
St. Joseph, MI 49085
(269) 983-7141 Ext. 7221
www.bcsheriff.org

Sheriff, Chuck Heit

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Today's The Herald-Palladium included inside

Niles Star

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Niles Township voters say 'no' to marijuana

By DEBRA HAIGHT
Leader Publications

NILES — Niles Township residents said no to marijuana Tuesday in votes on two proposals. Voters defeated a referendum on a township zoning amendment setting rules for up to 29 marijuana dispensaries and also approved a ban on all retail marijuana businesses in the township.

Unofficial results posted early Wednesday morning showed that the 1,819 people voted no on the referendum while 1,156 voted yes. That amounted to 61 percent voting no and 39 percent voting yes.

On the total ban proposal, 1,723 or nearly 58 percent voted yes while 1,259 or 42 percent voted no.

This was the third time since 2022 that Niles Township voters have weighed in on having marijuana businesses in the township. Voters defeated a proposal to allow retail marijuana businesses in 2022, they approved a similar proposal last year.

This year, Niles Township officials adopted a zoning ordinance amendment to govern marijuana establishments. It allowed marijuana businesses only on South 11th Street (M-51) on the southern end of the township from Fulkerson Road to the state line. Officials also said they would not limit the number of licenses issued and ended up accepting 29.

Tuesday, Township Supervisor Marge Durm-Hiatt declined to comment on the election results. She said that the township's attorney had advised them not to comment as they expect to face litigation.

Durm-Hiatt did make comments about the situation back in August when the township board voted to put the two proposals on the November ballot after a court order requiring them to accept petitions. Township officials had initially denied accepting the referendum petition.

People have spoken out over the past several months both for and against the two proposals and for and against marijuana in general. They questioned the township's decision to allow for so many marijuana businesses as well as the motives of those bringing one of the petitions.

Durm-Hiatt said in August that the township board had voted to allow an unlimited number of businesses

See **MARIJUANA**, page A4

Maxwell Harden / Leader Publications

Niles Charter Township voters defeated a referendum on a township zoning amendment setting rules for up to 29 marijuana dispensaries and also approved a ban on all retail marijuana businesses in the township.

Four Flags *royalty*

Kennedy Holloway crowned Miss Niles 2026

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES — The 100th anniversary of the Mr./Miss Niles Pageant was celebrated with much fanfare Saturday night.

Seven young women and four young men showcased their red carpet style and unique talents to become the face of the community in 2026. When all was said and done, Kennedy Holloway was crowned Miss Niles 2026 and Nathan Breland Mr. Niles 2026 Saturday evening at Niles High School. Holloway becomes the 89th Miss Niles and Breland the 21st Mr. Niles. The royal duo inherit their crowns from Miss and Mr. Niles 2025 Gabriella Gittens and Rowan Iwaniuk.

"In my head, I was thinking, 'I don't understand, how did I get here? I don't know why I deserved it at that point,'" Holloway said.

"For me, it's all the people that went into this," Breland said. "It was a great opportunity, and I wouldn't trade anything for it. The new friendships I've made along the way and getting to know all the incredible people behind this event are what first comes to mind."

The event was the zenith of the Miss Niles pageant, in which Little Miss and Mr., Junior Teen Miss, Teen Miss and Miss and Mr. Niles titles were awarded by a panel of judges.

"I think [the judges] had a very, very tough job," said Chairman Madelynne Rotondo. "We love all of our kids. We would have been thrilled with any one of them being king and queen, and I would not have wanted to be in [the judges'] shoes. All of these kids have put in so much work and that work paid off and we kept reminding them today is the day and you guys have worked hard up to this point and you just have to let God do his thing and he has a plan for us."

The Miss/Mr. Niles Pageant is affiliated with the Blossomtime Festival. Established in 1906, Blossomtime is Michigan's oldest and largest multi-community festival. This year's Blossomtime

See **PAGEANT**, page A4

Maxwell Harden / Leader Publications

Kennedy Holloway was crowned Miss Niles 2026 Saturday night.

The 2026 Miss Niles Court poses for a photo following the pageant.

BERRIEN COUNTY

Board of Health elects new chair

Edwards called a 'true advocate' on health issues

By LOUISE WREGE
Leader Publications

BENTON TOWNSHIP — Raymond Matejczyk was elected Wednesday as the new chair of the Berrien County Board of Health.

The St. Joseph resident is replacing Dr. Kenneth Edwards of St. Joseph, who died in October in Santiago De Compostela, Spain, at the age of 67.

EDWARDS

Several board members spoke fondly of Edwards as always being prepared, with science and data to back him up.

Al Pscholka, who was elected the vice chair, said Edwards was his trusted advisor on medical issues during the six years he served in the state Legislature.

Pscholka said he came out in 2012 against repealing the mandated use of motorcycle helmets in the state, even though it was unpopular for a Republican to do so, because Edwards explained to him what happens when a motorcyclist not wearing a helmet gets injured.

"I was on the losing end of that, so people criticized me for it, but you know what? It was the right thing to do and it was because of Ken's wise counsel. I just trusted him so much on medical stuff that I would reach out and talk to him," Pscholka said.

Board member Bill Chickering said Edwards was a strong advocate of the board standing up for what they believe to be the right public health positions in the community.

See **BOARD**, page A4

Lake Michigan College millage renewals approved by voters

Kubatzke thanks community for supporting capital, operating levies

By RALPH HEIBUTZKI
Leader Publications

BENTON TOWNSHIP — Voters gave Lake Michigan College an overwhelming thumbs-up in Tuesday's election for renewing its operating and capital millages.

A 20-year, 0.665-mill renewal of LMC's operating millage – which provides 20 percent of its budget – passed, with 15,189 voting "yes," and 12,391 voting "no," unofficial results from the Berrien County Clerk's Office showed. The levy will stay in place until 2046. Voters last approved it in 2006.

Voters also approved the second proposal, which called for a 50 percent reduction of its capital millage from 0.48 to 0.24 mills, with 15,695 voting "yes," and 11,877 voting "no," results showed.

The college launched the capital millage as a way of funding essential improvements without tapping into its general fund. Voters first passed the measure in 2016, which now runs through 2036.

LMC President Trevor Kubatzke thanked voters for their responsiveness to both proposals, in a statement released after Tuesday's results.

"I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the voters of the LMC District for passing the millage. Your support reflects a continued confidence in the work we do and the vital role our institution plays in our community," he said.

Passing the operating millage renewal was especially important, since it generates an estimated $8.9 million

See **LMC**, page A6

Today's obituaries • Pages A3-A4

Margaret Larson, Lillian Ballinger, Daniel Walter, Stella Heffington, Barbara Jones, Jami Griffee, Deanna Beneke, Ann Leatz, Timothy O'Connor, Glenda Stuckey, Marie Parks, Carolyn Reddick, Audrey Bettman, Donella Kujawa, William Pfifer, Jaqueta Payne, Frances Gowen, Donna Holcomb

Inside today's Herald-Palladium

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Comics	B5	Puzzles	B4
Focus	B1	Television	D3

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OBITUARIES

Margaret Larson

November 20, 1932 – October 28, 2025

Margaret "Peg" (Slaybaugh) Larson, 92, passed away on October 28, 2025, at her residence at Holy Cross Village, Notre Dame, Indiana.

Mrs. Larson lived for 60 years, from 1963 until 2023, in her home which she and her first husband, Thomas Clarke, built on the St. Joseph River south of Niles, Michigan. There she raised four daughters from her marriage to Mr. Clarke, leading 4H classes in sewing and dancing, and taking her daughters to piano lessons, 4H riding lessons and softball practice. Mrs. Larson made her mark on the community as an effective and organized leader of multiple civic and arts organizations. She became president or chair of nearly every organization she joined, including the Niles Garden Club, the local chapter of the League of Women Voters, the state and local Child Abuse Councils, Friends of the Snite Art Museum, the Women's League of the South Bend Symphony, Fernwood Botanical Gardens, Wednesday Club and Hoosier Art Patrons. She was also active as a member of the statewide League of Women Voters and the National Board of the Child Abuse Council.

In 1988, she married Ray B. Larson, who was her life partner with whom she travelled extensively: for example, to Irian Jaya (from which they were evacuated during a civil war), Bhutan, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda to see gorillas, staying in an ice hotel in Sweden, rafting the BioBio River in Chile, travelling the Silk Road, and hiking, biking and sailing with friends from around the world. She was a gifted lecturer about her travels and left many in her audience spellbound and wanting more. Mr. Larson predeceased her in 2015.

Mrs. Larson was born Margaret Jean Slaybaugh in Yonkers, NY, where she spent her childhood. She received her A.B. as a botany major from Mount Holyoke College, graduating in 1954. Before moving to Niles, she lived on the United States Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Baltimore Maryland.

Mrs. Larson is remembered by her friends and family for her unique ability to engage people of all ages and from around the world. She was curious about the people she met and places she visited and could strike up conversations, making the other person feel special. She also had a passion for the plants she encountered during her travels and in her own gardens, which were rich and diverse.

Mrs. Larson is survived by her four daughters and their husbands, Jennifer Clarke (Alan Barstow), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Margaret Clarke (Timothy Richards), Washington, DC, Rebecca Clarke Foster (David Foster), St. Joseph, Michigan, and Amy Clarke Shaffner (Michael Shaffner), Conifer, Colorado. She is also survived by eight grandchildren and eight great grandchildren; and by Mr. Larson's five children, including Linda Witche (Ron Witche), Granger, Indiana, who was a stalwart friend until the end; and his many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

In keeping with Mrs. Larson's wishes, cremation will take place. Palmer Funeral Home-Welsheimer Chapel is assisting the family with arrangements. The family will hold a memorial service at Fernwood in Buchanan, Michigan on April 25, 2026, to be followed by a private burial in August 2026.

Contributions may be made to Fernwood or the South Bend Symphony.

Online condolences can be sent to the family at www.palmerfuneralhomes.com.

Jami Griffee

August 15, 1943 – November 1, 2025

Jami Jo Griffee, 82, of Niles, died peacefully November 1, 2025, in the comfort of his family's presence.

His life began August 15, 1943, in Niles, Michigan the youngest of four children born to Jay and Mildred Griffee. He married the love of his life, Leslie Putz in St. Mary Catholic Church April 20, 1968, she later died in 2009.

Joe graduated from Niles High School, excelling in sports like football, basketball, wrestling, and track. His accomplishments were seen and mentioned in the local newspaper many times for his skill and talent. Joe served proudly in the Navy on the USS Von Steuben, as a frogman; a pre-SEAL underwater demolition team, and "plank owner"; a member of a ship's original commissioning crew. Joe was interested in skydiving after being introduced by a friend and was a member of the Lawton Sharpshooter's Skydiving Club. A Daily Star article quoted Joe, "Skydiving is similar to a football player's nervous "butterflies" before a game. It's only about 10 times worse, but that's the enjoyment of it." He was part owner of his father's tavern, Jay's Lounge, opened in the early 1960's. Joe was a successful businessman, selling X-Ray equipment to hospitals in the region. His hobbies included; spending time with his friends and family, golfing, and of course Notre Dame football. He was a member of the American Legion in Buchanan. You could always find Joe at one of his favorite spots; drinking a beer and laughing with friends. He always had a story to tell.

Joe will be greatly missed by family and friends. He is survived by one son, Todd (Bonnie Jo) Griffee of Highland, Indiana; one daughter, Heather (Tony) Moffitt of Niles; six grandchildren Megan (J.C.) Bernarte of Misawa Japan, Ashley (Brandon) of Lakeview Indiana, Joe (Breanne) Griffee of Foley, Alabama, Brooke Anderson of Indianapolis, Tisha Moffitt of Niles, Antonio Moffitt of Niles; two step grandchildren, Mackenzie Walling, Brock Walling of southern Indiana; twenty great grandchildren, Olson, Blair, Ellis, Lucas, Gabriel, Bailey, baby Michelle, Savannah, Brandon Jr., Joshua Jr., Naomi, Aryus, Skylir, Ivy, Lennox, Nasami, Makai, Kaisley, Eulaila, Eliel; one sister, Julane Griffee; and a host of nieces, nephews, and cousins. He was preceded in death by his parents and beloved wife.

Family and friends will gather Wednesday, November 5, 2025 from 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. in Halbritter Wickens Funeral Services, 615 East Main Street, Niles. A service will be held Thursday, November 6, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. in Trinity Episcopal Church, 9 South 4th Street, Niles, Michigan, where Mr. Griffee will be accorded full Military Honors. Joe will be laid to rest in Mission Hill Memorial Gardens.

The family prefers contributions in memory of Joe to be made to Alzheimer's Association, Greater Michigan Chapter, 2944 Fuller Avenue Northeast, #101, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49505 or to www.alz.org/gmc.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Halbritter Wickens Funeral Services, Niles. Please share a memory or a message online: halbritterwickens.com.

Ann Leatz

November 17, 1941 – October 16, 2025

Ann Leatz, a gifted quilter, devoted wife, and beloved mother, passed away peacefully in her sleep on October 16, 2025, at the age of 83. Born on November 17, 1941, on a small farm in Dowagiac, MI. Ann lived a remarkable life filled with creativity, hard work, and an abiding love for her family and community.

Ann was an accomplished artist in the quilting world – highly regarded as a teacher, judge, and innovator. Her unique appliqué technique, developed through years of dedication and craftsmanship, earned her numerous national awards and the admiration of quilters across the country. Through her teaching and judging, Ann shared her passion for quilting with others, encouraging creativity, patience, and joy in every stitch.

Outside of her artistry, Ann found great peace and pleasure in tending to her flowers and cultivating beauty wherever she lived. Her garden was a reflection of her spirit – vibrant, nurturing, and full of life. She also treasured the fellowship shared around the dinner table, where conversation, laughter, and love flowed as freely as the meals she so thoughtfully prepared. Those moments of togetherness were at the heart of who she was: someone who built community through care and kindness.

Ann was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Ronald Raymond Leatz, who passed away in 2019. She is survived by her four children – Juell Morning & Stephen Leatz of 29 Palms, CA, Donna Koprek of Chicago, IL, and Roann Leatz of Harrisburg, PA – as well as many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, extended family members, and friends who will carry her memory in their hearts.

A Celebration of Life Gathering will be held from 2-5 PM on Saturday November 15, 2025, at Clark Chapel – Starks Family Funeral Homes, 405 Center St, Dowagiac, MI 49047.

Flowers are welcome, but the family requests donations to a local quilting guild, arts education program, or garden club in Ann's memory.

A second service will be held for her Pennsylvania friends in Harrisburg at a date and time to be determined.

Ann's life was a beautiful tapestry woven with kindness, love, and creativity. Her legacy will continue to bloom in the hearts and hands of all who were touched by her warmth and wisdom.

To share a memory or offer condolences, please visit Ann's personalized webpage at www.clarkch.com.

Barbara Jones

February 13, 1939 – November 3, 2025

Barbara Nelcene Jones, 86, of Dowagiac, formerly of Jones, died peacefully Monday, November 3, 2025, in the comfort of her family's presence.

Her life began February 13, 1939 in Hartford City Indiana.

She married William Earl Jones June 15, 1958 in Hartford City, Indiana. After forty-four years of marriage, he preceded her in death in 2002.

Barabara was a wonderful mother and wife. In spring of 1990 they purchased the Jones Camp Farm. Bill lived with her there until he passed 2002 and she stayed until 2023. Many happy family memories were made there.

Barbara will be greatly missed by family and friends. She is survived by three sons, Mike Jones, Kevin Jones, Steve Jones; six grandchildren; eight great grandchildren.

In addition to her husband, she was preceded in death by her parents, two brothers, two sisters, one daughter in law and two grandsons. The family will observe a remembrance in the spring of 2026.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Wagner Family Funerals Connelly Chapel, Cassopolis. Please share a memory or a message online: wagnercares.com.

Lillian Ballinger

November 4, 1947 – October 29, 2025

Lillian Kaye Ballinger, 77, of Centreville, died peacefully Wednesday, October 29, 2025, just six days shy of her 78th birthday.

Her life began November 4, 1947 in Kalamazoo, Michigan, the oldest of three daughters born to George and Sylvia (Zaika) Horner.

Lillian will be greatly missed by family and friends. She is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Joseph and Denise Ballinger; her granddaughter, Ellison Ballinger; one sister, Cheryl (Phillip) Wagner; two nieces, Sonya and Jessica. She was preceded in death by her parents and one sister, Karla Harvey.

The family will observe a private remembrance.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Wagner Family Funerals Connelly Chapel, Cassopolis. Please share a memory or a message online: wagnercares.com.

Obituary policy: Leader Publications publishes death notices at a cost of $15. Extended obituaries are priced based on character count. If the newspaper makes an error, the obituary will be reprinted at no charge. For more information, or to submit an obituary, email obits@leaderpub.com.

Death notices

Glenda Stuckey, 87, of Berrien Springs, passed away on Saturday, November 1, 2025 at Royalton Manor. Arrangements are pending and have been entrusted to Allred Funeral Home, Berrien Springs. www.AllredFuneralHome.com.

Carolyn Reddick, 75, of Niles, passed away on Friday, October 31, 2025 at home. Arrangements are pending and have been entrusted to Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Niles. www.BrownFuneralHomeNiles.com.

Audrey J. Brettman, 68, of Berrien Springs, passed away on Saturday, November 1, 2025. Arrangements are pending and have been entrusted to Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Niles. www.BrownFuneralHomeNiles.com

Donella Irene Kujawa, 69, of Niles, Michigan, passed away on Tuesday, October 28, 2025. A visitation will be held from 1-3 p.m. at Mission Hills Memorial Gardens on Friday, Nov. 7.

William Harvey Pfifer, 77, passed away on Monday, November 3, 2025, in Stevensville, Michigan. Arrangements have been entrusted to and are pending with Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Jaqueta Jean Payne, 70, passed away on Monday, November 3, 2025, in Niles, Michigan. Arrangements have been entrusted to and are pending with Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Frances Gowen, 85, passed away on Wednesday, November 5, 2025, in Niles, Michigan. Arrangements have been entrusted to and are pending with Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Donna Holcomb

June 15, 1931 – November 1, 2025

Donna M. Holcomb, 94, wife of the late Orla Leroy "Lee" Holcomb, passed away peacefully due to natural causes on November 1, 2025, in Niles, Michigan. Born on June 15, 1931, in Cleveland, Ohio, Donna's life was a testament to the power of love, family, and her faith in Jesus Christ. Her enduring faith and caring spirit left an indelible mark on the hearts and lives of all who knew her.

The daughter of the late Cleo (Rodd) Butler, Donna grew up in Gibsonburg, Ohio in a nurturing environment under the care of her grandmother, Donna Marie Rodd and grandfather, Harry Rodd. Her grandmother, who also cared for Donna's disabled aunt, Laura (Honey) imparted a passion for caring for others and shaped her into the selfless and compassionate person she became. Observing the sacrificial love and care given to her aunt led to her choosing nursing as her profession. Her journey through life was shared with her beloved high school sweetheart, Orla Leroy "Lee" Holcomb, whom she wed on July 7, 1951. Although Lee preceded her in death on September 16, 2023, the memories they created together continue to live on.

A dedicated mother, Donna is survived by her children, Mark (Ellen) Holcomb, Linda Holcomb-Kubiak, and Matthew Holcomb. She took immense pride in her role as a grandmother to Lisa Holcomb-Rathsack, Heather Morris-Littlefield, Carla Holcomb-Lindblad, Jennifer Holcomb-Balo, and Ryan Kubiak, and as a great-grandmother to three cherished great-grandchildren, Denes and Lee Balo, and Gracie Lindblad. Her family was the cornerstone of her life, and each member felt the warmth and care of her loving embrace. Donna's legacy also lives on through her brother, Robert Butler, and her sister, Geneva Flaff. She was a beloved aunt to several nieces and nephews, each of whom benefited from her wisdom and care. She was predeceased by her brother, William Butler, whose memory she held close to her heart.

Professionally, Donna was a respected registered nurse, having graduated with a nursing degree from the University of Toledo. Her nursing career started with working on the pediatric ward at Toledo Hospital, then at Memorial Hospital in South Bend, followed by being the head nurse at Heaven Hubbard Home in New Carlisle, Indiana and The Brothers of Holy Cross Nursing Home. Her caring nature found its true calling in this role, where she provided comfort and care to countless individuals throughout her tenure.

Described by those who knew her as loving, kind, and thoughtful, Donna's impact on those around her demonstrated her deeply held belief the dignity of every human being rooted in being created in the image of God. She approached life with determination and endurance, placing the needs of others before her own. Her greatest joy was in the time she spent with her family, especially her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She enjoyed crocheting and made many blankets for family and friends.

We say goodbye knowing she is at home with the Lord Jesus Christ, who welcomed her into his kingdom with these words "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of the Lord". Matthew 25:21.

Memorial contributions may be made in Donna's memory to the Salvation Army 1707 Miller Drive, Niles, Michigan 49120. www.salvationarmyusa.org/mi/niles. or Samaritan's Purse, PO Box 3000, Boone, NC 28607. www.Samaitanspurse.org.

Funeral services will be held on Monday, November 17, 2025 at 11:00 a.m. at Brown Funeral Home with a time of visitation one hour prior. An interment will follow at Silverbrook Cemetery.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Niles. www.BrownFuneralHomeNiles.com.

Marie Parks

July 5, 1964 – October 29, 2025

Marie Lynne Parks ended her long battle with cancer. After a lifetime of struggle, laughing through the pain and teaching us to find the sadistic smile in any situation. She lived her life with no apologies and as few regrets as possible. She is to join her father and brother in heaven.

She is survived by her husband Kenneth Zinsmaster, Mother Marylee Parks, sisters Roberta Bryan and Deb Headley, brothers Michael Parks, Tim Headley, Maurice Parks III, and Forest L Headley and all their children. Her 4 D's and all her grandchildren. So many friends and family she has made beyond blood ties, because she was a force of nature. She touched so many lives in such deep ways.

Visitation will be held at Hansen-Onion-Martell Funeral Home, Marinette, Wis., on Saturday, November 1, 2025, from 1 until 3 p.m., with a service to follow at 3 p.m. A gathering for remembrance will be held at their home afterwards.

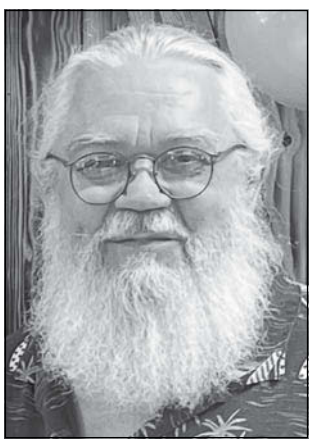
She loves all of you and misses you all.

Obituaries continued on page A4

OBITUARIES

Daniel Lee 'Dan' Walter

October 28, 1957 – October 29, 2025



Daniel Lee "Dan" Walter, 68, of Buchanan, died peacefully Wednesday, October 29, 2025 in the comfort of his family's presence.

His life began October 28, 1957 in South Bend, Indiana one of two children born to Sharon and Minnie Walter.

Dan embraced the love of his family. His children and grandchildren were absolutely the center of his world; his devotion to them was unmeasurable. Every moment spent with them was a treasure, filled with laughter, lessons, and the creation of memories that will be cherished for generations. He reveled in their accomplishments, offered unwavering support during challenges, and showered them with unconditional love.

A proud veteran, Dan served in the Coast Guard, embodying the values of duty, honor, and commitment. His service forged a lifelong passion for the water and found immense joy in boating and being with nature. Beyond his family and military service, Dan was a man of vast knowledge, with a particular passion for anything mechanical. Whether it was working on vehicles, boats, or even lawn mowers, he shared his expertise and love for these pursuits with all who knew him.

Dan will be greatly missed by family and friends. He is survived by his daughter, Heather (Richard Hall) Walter of Buchanan; son, Daniel Lee Walter II of Buchanan; mother of his children, Pat Walter of Stevensville; six grandchildren, Kaitlynne (Ryker), Zach, Brayden, Jade, Ember, Harley; one great grandchildren, Amelia; sister, Mildred (Joe) Baier of Paducah, Kentucky; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents.

Family and friends will gather Saturday, November 8, 2025 from 10:00 a.m. until time of service at 12:00 noon in Halbritter Wickens Funeral Services, 615 East Main Street, Niles.

Dan will be laid to rest in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Buchanan, where he will be accorded full Military Honors.

The family prefers contributions in memory of Dan be made to the funeral home to help defray expenses. Halbritter Wickens Funeral Services, 615 East Main Street, Niles, Michigan 49120.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Halbritter Wickens Funeral Services, Niles. Please share a memory or a message online: halbritterwickens.com.

Deanna Beneke

November 18, 1974 – November 2, 2025

Deanna Heather Beneke, 50, of Dowagiac, passed away surrounded by her family on Sunday, November 2, 2025, at Bronson Methodist Hospital in Kalamazoo.

Deanna was born on November 18, 1974, in Dowagiac, where she spent most of her life, with work taking her to different cities in Indiana and Illinois. She never met a stranger; she could strike up a conversation with anyone and make new friends anywhere.

A jack-of-all-trades, Deanna worked a variety of jobs throughout her life, and was proud to have handled accounts with Conn Selmer, manned the cage at the casino, and ushered at Notre Dame games.

During her time off, Deanna enjoyed the lake life – being at the beach and fi shing. She was an avid music-lover and was known for her karaoke rendition of "Go Your Own Way," by Fleetwood Mac. She loved to play card and board games, chief among them being Yahtzee, Cribbage and Euchre. She enjoyed traveling, recounting her trip to Cabo and looking forward to trips to Florida with her mother.

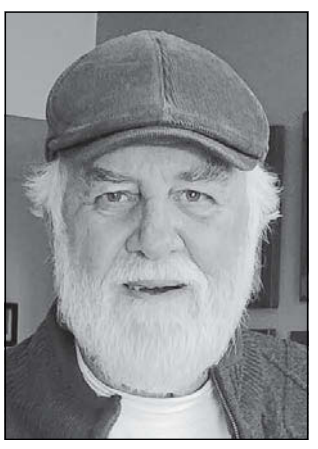
Above all, Deanna loved spending time with her family, friends, her dogs Bud and Miller, and the kids around the neighborhood. She enjoyed being a permanent member of the "kids' table" at family events.

Deanna is survived by her mother, Joan Beneke; three siblings, Herman (Vanessa) Beneke IV, Cris Goss (Gary Crouch), and Joanne (Bryan) Haas; nine nieces and nephews; a great-niece and great-nephew; and her two loyal dogs. She was preceded in death by her father, Herman Beneke III.

A service to celebrate Deanna' life will be held at 2:00 PM on Friday, November 14, at Clark Chapel – Starks Family Funeral Homes, 405 Center St, Dowagiac, where friends may visit with her family from 1:00 PM until the time of service. Interment will follow in South Wayne Cemetery. To share a memory or offer condolences, please visit Deanna's personalized webpage at www.clarkch.com.

Timothy O'Connor

December 13, 1950 – October 10, 2025



Timothy O'Connor, 74, of Jacksonville, Florida, passed away on Friday, October 10, 2025. He was born in Philadelphia, PA but spent most of his childhood in Michigan. He attended Niles High School in Niles, MI where he met his future wife, Teresa Quade. Tim and Terri graduated in 1969 and were married in 1971. After high school, Tim enlisted in the United States Army and served in Germany as a part of the Army Security Agency as a Russian Linguist. He and Terri lived in Germany for 3 years before returning to the states to serve in the Military Training Department at Fort Riley, Kansas.

In 1977, Tim and Terri welcomed their fi rst child, Sean Timothy O'Connor. Shortly after Sean's birth, Tim was honorably discharged from the Army. He and his family moved to Tampa, FL. Tim attended the University of South Florida and graduated in 1979 with a degree in Business Administration. That year, the couple also welcomed their second child, Erin Kathleen.

After graduation, Tim began his career in banking but transitioned into Human Resources. He eventually started his own consulting firm. His career took him traveling all over the South, including Biloxi, MS, and Augusta, GA. In 2001, he and his wife settled in Jacksonville, FL. At 65, he retired from UF Medical as the training director in the HR department.

Tim was an avid golfer and would share his exploits with anyone who was interested. He also enjoyed reading science fiction and passed his love of the genre on to both his children. His other hobbies included chess, video games, and driving his BMW convertible with the top down. He was a die hard Tampa Bay Buccaneers fan and would watch them whenever they played.

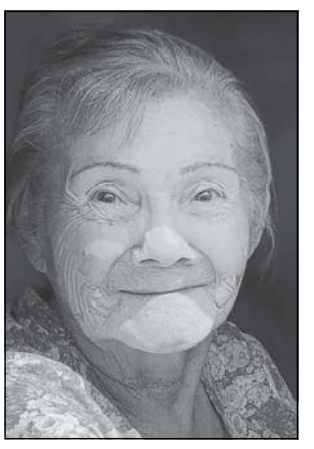
Tim was a charismatic and friendly man. As a life long learner he loved connecting with people and sharing ideas – anything from the latest news to the mysteries of outer space. His favorite subject, though, was his family, working his children and grandchildren into many conversations.

Timothy O'Connor is survived by his wife, Terri; two children, Sean and Erin; four grandchildren, Timothy, Bridget, Malcolm, and Abigail; and his brother, Mark.

Services will be held at the Florida National Cemetery.

Stella Heffington

April 4, 1935 – November 3, 2025



Stella Yvonne (O'Keefe) Heffington, age 90, the beloved matriarch of her family, passed away peacefully at home on Monday morning, November 3, 2025, surrounded by her loved ones. She was a proud member of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians.

Stella began her working life as a nurse's aide before devoting herself fully to her family as a homemaker and stay-at-home mother to her nine children after marrying the love of her life, Junior Lee Heffington.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Junior Lee Heffington; her daughters, Marcia Brown and Susan Barry; and her grandson, Jeremy Heffington.

Stella is survived by her faithful companion, her dog Stitch; her children, Timothy Heffington, Karen Spicher, Ronald Heffington, Patti (Brad) Hacker, Cindy Black, Shari Carroll, and Daniel Heffington; and her many cherished grandchildren: Amanda (Matt) Cummins, Joe Spicher, Matt Spicher, Ryan Spicher, Jasmine Fuller, Michael Fuller Jr, Madisyn Fuller, Angel (Mike) Woodard, Edward (Melissa) Brown, Eric Brown, Heather (Hank) Mays, Ceaiara Heffington, Anthony Heffington, Megan Heffington, Ronald Heffington Jr., Christopher Hacker, Brandy Nelson, Amy Moore, Steven Black, and Isiah Heffington. She also leaves behind several great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. She is further survived by her siblings, Margaret Parker, Ernie Shoemaker, Hal Weatherwax, Tim (Sandra) Wallin, Theresa Barber, Eva Hoekstra, Lee Falk, Angela Morton and Marie Cuendet.

Stella will be remembered for her fi ery spirit, unwavering love, and forgiving heart. She was as stubborn as she was strong, and there was never a stray animal she didn't take in or care for. Her kindness, humor, and fi erce devotion to her family will live on in the hearts of all who knew and loved her.

Stella's family will be celebrating her life privately. Interment will be in Sacred Heart Cemetery, Dowagiac. Arrangements were entrusted to Clark Chapel – Starks Family Funeral Homes, Dowagiac, MI. To share a memory or offer condolences, please visit Stella's personalized webpage at www.clarkch.com.

BOARD

From page A1

"Ken was a true advocate on a lot of issues that many other organizations would be real pussy foot about talking about," Chickering said. "He was saying, 'We've got to get out and educate our people.' I hope this organization will continue that kind of advocacy because not only do we deliver great public health, we have to make sure the community knows what that is."

Appointed to take Edwards' place on the board was Dr. Frederick Johansen, who retired in 2021 after working 44 years with the Berrien County Health Department, with 22 of those years as the Berrien County medical director.

Contact: lwrege@TheHP.com, 932-0361, Twitter: @HPWrege

PAGEANT

From page A1

theme is "Oh the places you'll see," inspired by Dr. Seuss. Each Blossomtime community will feature a major city across the world, with the Miss Niles Pageant presenting Rome: The Eternal City.

The pageant's theme was "Rome: The Eternal City." Rome is the capital city of Italy, known for its ancient ruins, world-class art, and landmarks. Contestants performed a dance routine before taking part in a question, a "commercial" presentation where each contestant selected a Roman deity and wrote and performed a commercial to advertise a product of theirs, a formal presentation and a fast walkthrough.

Kennedy attends Niles High School and is enrolled in the Allied Health program. She has been recognized as Student of The Month for her commitment to excellence. As a gymnast, she strengthened her discipline and perseverance, which helped her become a leader on the volleyball and tennis courts. In her spare time, she enjoys being a volunteer coach at various youth camps.

Holloway said she was inspired by her friend Amelia Rodgers, Miss Niles 2024, to participate in the pageant.

"She was a big part of my life growing up, and I think she is the reason I did this today," Holloway said.

A junior at Niles High School, Breland is a member of the honor roll and National Honor Society. Usually a member of the backstage crew, Breland was excited to be on stage Saturday night. He is also a member of the student council, Business Professionals of America and holds the title of secretary in the Niles High School Culture Club.

He enjoys volunteering with children at vacation bible school and aspires to become a pediatric surgeon and to focus on supporting underserved communities.

Breland enjoyed getting to know his fellow contestants Trenton Scott, Jacob Iwaniuk and Beau Kirtdoll.

"It all started out with a meeting at the Embers," he said. "It was just a lot of people I knew from school, like Trenton, Beau and Jacob. Two of them are seniors, and one is in my junior class with me. We already knew each other but we've definitely grown since the meeting and it's been a great opportunity to get to know them."

When asked about what she would want her Miss Niles legacy to be, Kennedy said she would like it to be her energy and passion for the program. Breland said he would like for people to remember him for being kind.

Holloway is eager to represent Niles in Blossomtime and make memories with her court.

"I'm looking forward to all the people I'm going to meet and the experience it'll take me throughout my whole life," she said.

Breland is looking forward to representing Niles in local parades.

"When you're little, you always see them up there on those fl oats and you think it would be really cool if I could be part of that," he said. "I'm lucky enough to be part of a group of people who get to represent that, and that's a really amazing opportunity."

Throughout her reign, Holloway aims to inspire the next generation to be themselves and to try new things.

"I would tell them to be their truest self," she said. "Don't disguise yourself to be someone you don't want to be."

Miss/Mr. Niles Pageant results

Miss Niles 2026: Kennedy Holloway

1st Runner-Up: Izabella Ledsema

2nd RU: McKenna Albright

Miss Congeniality: Gracie Jackson

Mr. Niles 2026: Nathan Breland

1st RU: Beau Kirtdoll

Miss Teen Niles 2026: Izabelle Nelson

1st RU: Lillian Justis

2nd RU: Kenley Weston

Miss Jr. Teen Niles 2026: Annabel Strebinger

1st RU: Madison Rodriguez

2nd RU: Kadence Mills

Little Miss Niles 2026: Mia Ibanez

1st RU: Harper Legus

2nd RU: Juliana Huff

Little Mr. Niles 2026: Andrew Love

MARIJUANA

From page A1

after the township attorney had advised them that limiting the number of licenses they granted could open the township up to lawsuits.

Niles Township has already collected $145,000 in license fees from the 29 businesses that had planned to locate in the township.

If all had actually opened, the township could have reaped over $1.6 million a year in state excise tax revenue which Durm-Hiatt had said would be spent on projects involving roads and parks.

Local business owners had expressed frustration with what's happened this year. They had entered into contracts to sell their properties only to have everything put on hold.

As for the petition drives, some people alleged that the petition drives were not grassroot efforts but orchestrated by people outside the area and a marijuana business inside the city of Niles.

Information provided by the Berrien County Clerk's Office showed that the referendum petition was filed by the Committee Against Unlimited Pot Shops in Niles Charter Township which is based in Troy, Michigan. People also alleged that at least one marijuana business based in the city of Niles was behind the petition drives.

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Teen gets prison time for JD's Truck Stop shooting

By DEBRA HAIGHT
Leader Publications

NILES — A Mishawaka teen accused in a June road rage incident in Bertrand Township has been sentenced to prison.

Ryland Louis Mayfield, 19, of Mishawaka, pleaded guilty to two counts of assault with intent to murder and was sentenced Monday in Berrien County Trial Court to two concurrent prison terms.

MAYFIELD

Mayfield received a sentence of 12 to 59 years in prison on one count and a concurrent 10 years to 59 years in prison on the other count. He has credit for 146 days served and must pay $326 in fines and costs.

The incident occurred June 6 in Bertrand Township near JD's Truck Stop at U.S. 12 and Mayflower Road. Two victims were shot, one more seriously than the other and still has bullet fragments inside him. The other had injuries to his ear which was ripped by a bullet.

"Thankfully we're not here on more egregious charges," Assistant Prosecutor Jerry Vigansky said. "He was spraying a car full of people with bullets, this could have been murder. His actions were totally inappropriate and careless."

Defense attorney Elias Muawad said that he has urged Mayfield to take the time he will spend in prison to concentrate on getting his high school diploma and skills he can use when he gets out. "I want him to use his time in prison to get better so he can live the rest of his life successfully," he said.

Mayfield apologized and said he had made a horrible mistake both in shooting at the other car and altering his gun to make it an automatic weapon. "I will use the time wisely to improve myself," he said. "I'm so thankful that the victim survived."

Berrien County Trial Court Judge Gordon Hosbein spoke about the problem that gun "switches" are causing in society as they modify guns to be automatic weapons.

"These switches are a problem and very dangerous," he said. "They turn a weapon into an unstoppable weapon. They are dangerous and I hope someone gets control of them, they hurt people."

Judge Hosbein called Mayfield a "young man who made a stupid choice." He encouraged Mayfield to better himself while in prison. "I've seen people come out of prison better people," he said. "Don't waste your time, take advantage of the opportunities offered."

A Dowagiac man already in prison for criminal sexual conduct was sentenced to another prison term Monday for third-degree criminal sexual conduct.

Johnathon Abram-Ross Barrett, 25, of Dowagiac, pleaded guilty to third degree criminal sexual conduct involving a victim between age 13 and 15 and was sentenced to 10 years to 15 years in prison and $198 in fines and costs. He has credit for no time served and must register as a sex offender.

The incident occurred March 28, 2024 in Niles. He was sentenced in October in Cass County to 10 to 15 years in prison for third degree CSC involving a victim age 13 to 15 in what prosecutors there described as a sex trafficking case.

The new sentence handed down Monday is concurrent with the Cass County sentence. He has credit for no time served as he was on parole at the time of both incidents.

BARRETT

COLEMAN

ROBINSON

Monday, Assistant Prosecutor Myrene Koch called the Berrien County case a "very serious situation" in which Barrett picked up a minor child and took her to a remote location where he assaulted her. "This will have a very lasting impact on her life," she said.

Defense attorney Carri Briseno said that Barrett has acknowledged his actions. For his part, Barrett apologized to the victim and her family.

Judge Hosbein noted Barrett's past record which goes back to 2020 when he was sentenced for accosting a minor. "You are a predator," the judge said. "You are the person we warn our children about … I don't know what it will take to stop you from doing this in the future."

Also Monday:

Ashley Jo Coleman, 39, of South Bend, pleaded guilty to possession of methamphetamine and was sentenced to 300 days in jail with credit for 78 days served and $258 in fines and costs. The incident occurred Aug. 19 in Niles.

Linda Yvonne Robinson, 39, of South Bend, pleaded guilty to use of methamphetamine and possession of a weapon by a felon and was sentenced to credit for 110 days served and $308 in fines and costs. The incident occurred Oct. 31, 2021 in Niles.

Physician Tom Catena to visit Notre Dame

Courtesy of NOTRE DAME

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — Physician, humanitarian and medical missionary Dr. Tom Catena will visit the University of Notre Dame on Nov. 12 (Wednesday) to deliver the 2025 Rev. Bernie Clark, C.S.C., Lecture at 5 p.m. in the Eck Visitors Center Auditorium.

Sponsored by the Institute for Social Concerns, the annual lecture was created in 2009 to highlight justice issues and themes from Catholic social tradition related to human dignity and the common good. Dr. Donald Zimmer, an emergency medical specialist with Beacon Health System in South Bend, will introduce Catena.

Catena's lecture, titled "Hope and Healing," is also part of the 2025-26 Notre Dame Forum, which is organized around the theme "Cultivating Hope."

CATENA

The event is free and open to the public.

"Catena embodies the spirit of Father Bernie and his 'theory of enough,' making him the perfect choice for this year's lecture," said Suzanne Shanahan, the Leo and Arlene Hawk Executive Director of the Institute for Social Concerns. "Undeterred by restrictions on humanitarian aid and working with limited resources in Sudan, Catena has been able to make an outsized impact in a war-torn region that has been largely abandoned by larger Western relief organizations. His work and his story are truly inspiring."

Catena is an American physician who has been practicing in Gidel in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan since 2008. The region has been an area of active conflict since the mid-1980s, and Catena is the only surgeon for the surrounding population of 750,000 people. Catena credits his Catholic faith for his work and says he is inspired by St. Francis of Assisi. He is known by locals as "Dr. Tom" and is widely respected by the population.

In 2015, Catena was named to the Time 100. In 2017, he was awarded the second annual Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity. And in 2024, he was awarded the Theodore Roosevelt Award, the highest honor the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) may confer on an individual. He has also been awarded honorary doctorates from Brown University (2016), Yerevan State Medical University (2017) and Duke University (2022).

Catena is chair of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative.

Learn more at social concerns.nd.edu/bernie clark/.

Area residents sentenced on drug charges

By DEBRA HAIGHT
Leader Publications

CASSOPOLIS — Several area residents were sentenced Friday in Cass County Circuit Court on drug related charges.

Travis John Frays, 35, of Vandalia, pleaded guilty to possession of methamphetamine as a habitual offender and was sentenced to three years probation in the Adult Treatment Court, credit for 69 days served and $2,628 in fines and costs.

FRAYS

The incident occurred April 18 in Edwardsburg. Police stopped him for having no insurance and was uncooperative with police. Police found a syringe and methamphetamine in a search of the vehicle.

Assistant Prosecutor Jason Ronning noted that Frays faces prison guidelines if he fails on probation. "I hope that is motivation enough," he said. "If he doesn't succeed, there will be serious consequences."

Defense attorney Robert Drake said Frays realizes the situation he is in if he fails on probation. "There's not a lot to say that he doesn't know," he said. "He says his family is sick and tired of him engaging in a criminal lifestyle. He lost custody of his child and maybe the support of his family. He feels this is his last chance to pull out of the spiral."

"He's high risk and high need," Drake added. "If he doesn't change, there are prison guidelines here. This is one of those situation where he's at least making the effort. Hopefully there is enough at stake here and the fear and risk of going to prison will be a motivator."

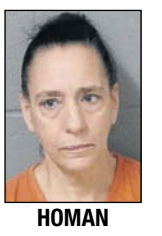
Cass County Circuit Court Judge Mark Herman noted that this was the fourth time Frays has been before him on criminal charges. He pointed out that Frays has had his probation revoked in the past and has spent the better part of two years in jail.

"In 2022, you were 32, had a ninth grade education, unemployed and said you had been using meth since the age of 14," Judge Herman said. "Now you're 35, still have a ninth grade education and still unemployed. The only difference is that you've started having a relationship with your daughter where your rights had been terminated."

PARSONS

ECKLER

HOPPER


HOMAN

"Your life is exactly the same as it was three years ago," he said. "I hope you're serious about making changes. You can either have a good life or the next time you will end up in prison."

Marc Loyd Parsons, 41, of M-62 in Cassopolis, pleaded guilty to possession of methamphetamine and disturbing the peace and was sentenced to three years probation in the Adult Treatment Court, completion of the Twin County probation program, credit for 71 days served and a total of $2,978 in fines and costs.

The incident occurred July 21 in Cassopolis. Police were called when Parsons who was riding a lawn mower was having a dispute with his girlfriend who was in a car. Judge Herman noted that this was the third time in five years that he has been sentenced for possession of methamphetamine.

Robert Vaughn Eckler, 58, of Tharpe Lake Road in Edwardsburg, pleaded guilty to use of methamphetamine and was sentenced to 12 months probation, and $1,125 in fines and costs. He can keep the charge off his record if he is successful on probation.

The incident occurred Aprill 23 in Edwardsburg.

William Daniel Hopper, 20, of Three Rivers, pleaded guilty to possession of methamphetamine and was sentenced to two years probation, credit for 22 days served and $2,268 in fines and costs. He can keep the charge off his record if he is successful on probation.

The incident occurred July 20 in Marcellus.

Darlene Rane Homan, 55, formerly of Edwardsburg, now of Battle Creek, was sentenced for possession of methamphetamine to an additional year of probation and credit for 54 days served.

She had been given the opportunity to have a delayed sentence and have the charge reduced to use of methamphetamine but failed to complete her initial probationary terms.

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Berrien County unofficial election results

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

Listed below are the unofficial election results from Berrien County for the Nov. 4 general election with 100 percent of precincts reported.

City of Niles Dial-A-Ride Transportation
Yes – 760
No – 396

Niles Charter Township Referendum on Zoning Ordinance Amendment 25-01
Yes – 1,156
No – 1,819

Niles Charter Township Prohibition of Marihuana Establishments Ordinance
Yes – 1,723
No – 1,259

Brandywine Community Schools State of Michigan, Counties of Berrien and Cass Building and Site Sinking Fund Millage Renewal Prop
Yes – 883
No – 632

Lake Michigan College Charter Millage Renewal Proposition for Operating and General Purposes
Yes – 15,189
No – 12,391

Lake Michigan College Charter Millage Renewal and Reduction Proposition for Capital Purposes
Yes – 15,695
No – 11,877

LMC

From page A1

in funding for every day items, like instruction time and classroom space, as Kubatzke, his management team, and LMC board members have noted.

"This vote is an investment in the future of our students, our workforce, and our region," Kubatzke said. "It affirms our shared commitment to providing accessible, high-quality education and training that transforms lives and strengthens our local economy. Thanks to your continued support, Lake Michigan College will remain a strong and innovative resource for everyone in our community."

Both measures jumped to early leads from the beginning, that continued to grow, as the vote counting continued Tuesday evening.

The operating millage renewal passed by a 55-44 percent margin, while the capital millage reduction did slightly better, winning approval by a 56-43 percent margin, results showed.

But the persistence of critical statements aired against the millages on social media, prompted LMC officials to address the claims at two recent board meetings, and do public presentations – such as the Benton Harbor City Commission, for example.

The Southwest Michigan Association of Realtors and Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber of Commerce both endorsed the millages, with the Berrien County GOP standing out as the sole major organization to go on record against them.

In response, LMC cited studies demonstrating its overall economic value and impact, including one by Lightcast that estimated the college's contribution to the local economy at $371 million annually – via graduate earnings, college operations, and reduced service costs, as Board President Joan Smith noted last week.

"Community colleges work like public safety, libraries and roads – everyone benefits. We all depend on skilled nurses, police officer, teachers and technicians trained at LMC – whether we visit campus or not," she said.

Niles pastor to celebrate pastoral anniversary

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES — A local church is celebrating nearly 20 years with its pastor this weekend.

Pastor Andre Love, founder of I Care Church, will celebrate his Apostle's Anniversary on Sunday, Nov. 9, 2025, with a special worship experience.

The event, themed "Let's Have Church," will celebrate multiple Love milestones: 18 years of pastoring, 23 years of preaching and 1.5 years of apostleship.

The worship experience will begin at 5:30 p.m. at I Care Church,819 Oak St., Niles. The celebration will honor Love and will feature special guest Bishop Andrew Gibson from Vernon Baptist Church in Chicago, Ill.

A Niles High School graduate, Love attended Southwestern Michigan College and Siena Heights before and earned a bachelor's degree in religious studies from Calumet. He said his ministry began as a dream in Hammond, Ind., growing out of a focus on traveling to colleges to preach the gospel.

"We used to do two or three-day 'crusades' and bring in sound equipment, local music artists and then I would preach," Love said.

Love comes from a lineage of ministry; his grandfather, Benny L. Smith, was an area pastor and his father pastored New Good Hope in Buchanan, where he was born.

"Ministry has been a prevalent part of my life," he said. "When I was younger, I used to have dreams about wearing a white robe. I've always been a person who is encouraging and helping people. Most people think pastoring is just the preaching part, but it's a lot more than that."

Love is honored to follow in his family's footsteps and continue the pastoral tradition.

"It's an honor that God would choose me, and the greatest honor is that He would allow me to come home. I started in Hammond, had locations in Bloomington, Ind. and Grand Rapids, but as soon as I moved back to Niles, it was a no-brainer. This is where we need to be. Many people I grew up with have come through the church. Celebrating 18 years and 23 years of preaching, given everything I went through, is tremendous."

Pastor Andre Love, founder of I Care Church, will celebrate his Apostle's Anniversary on Sunday.
Maxwell Harden / Leader Publications

Photo provided
Brandywine middle and high school students are set to perform "Beetlejuice Jr." Nov. 20-22 in the Brandywine Elementary Gym.

Brandywine musical program to perform 'Beetlejuice Jr.' Nov. 20-22

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES CHARTER TOWNSHIP — Brandywine students are preparing for their first musical performance of the school year.

The schools' musical group will be performing "Beetlejuice Jr." Nov. 20-22 in the Brandywine Elementary Gym.

Based on the Broadway musical adaptation of Tim Burton's iconic film, the show follows Lydia Deetz, a strange and unusual teen fascinated by the afterlife who teams up with a trickster named Beetlejuice."

Performances will be held on Nov. 20, 21, and 22 at 7 p.m., with a Saturday matinee scheduled for Nov. 22 at 2 p.m.. The shows will take place in the Brandywine Elementary Gym; patrons are asked to enter through the back doors. Tickets are $8 for general admission and $5 for students and seniors with ID.

Director Daysha Amster said her students are set to showcase their talent and Bobcat pride in the supernatural production, which highlights the creativity and dedication of the young performers.

"We're so proud of the energy and heart our students have brought to this show," said Director Daysha Amster. "This experience is only possible thanks to our dream team of staff and volunteers who continue to go above and beyond for our kids and our community."

WEDDING

Anderson-Schwinkendorf

William Edward Andersen and Ashley Amber Schwinkendorf from Valparaiso, Ind. were married on November 1, 2025, at The Morris Estate in Niles, Michigan. The ceremony took place on a beautiful fall day overlooking the Saint Joseph River, surrounded by friends and family. Their celebration was filled with joy, gratitude, and love.

Joining them for the special occasion was their 10-week-old son, Edward William Andersen, whose presence made the day all the more meaningful for the new family.

Aldi opens in Niles Township

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES CHARTER TOWNSHIP — The new Aldi grocery store in Niles Township is officially open.

The store, located at 1832 South 11th Street – the former site of Shelton's Farm Market – began its soft opening Wednesday and officially opened Thursday morning. The grocery store focuses on providing quality groceries and household essentials including fresh produce, organic foods and exclusive Aldi brands.

Community members are enjoying having a new grocery option in the area.

It means a lot because I shop it at Aldi every week, and now I don't have to drive to South Bend for it. It's a big deal," said Niles resident, Jim. This is my first trial run to the new store. It looks very nice."

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Sports

Vikings fall to Dux in D3 playoffs
Page B2

Got results?
max.harden@leaderpub.com

Buchanan falls to Edwardsburg in 3 sets

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

BUCHANAN — The Buchanan volleyball team finished its season Wednesday against Edwardsburg.

The Eddies swept the Bucks 25-18,25-16,25-13 Wednesday in Division 2 district semifinal play.

"It was good," said Edwardsburg coach Sarah Strefling. "[Buchanan] came out strong, they knew what to do to defeat us – go after our defense – which they did a lot. We made the adjustments, and I felt a lot more comfortable. With them hosting, I knew that it would be loud in here, hot in here and the low ceiling, which we're not used to. We had to settle in a little bit but we did well."

Ella Fanslow led Buchanan with six kills and Finley Kehoe had a team-high 13 digs and added an ace, while Sydney Denison had five kills and Morgan Weldy eight digs and 19 assists. Emily Holt had six digs and one ace and Gabby Carson finished with three kills.

"I thought we played incredibly well," said Buchanan Head Coach Shelly Bender. "My team showed a tremendous amount of effort and truly demonstrated how much we've grown throughout the season."

Sarah Pippin tallied 16 kills, 10 digs, one block and one ace and Ella Laskowski had 12 kills and three digs while Mya Eberlein added six kills, four digs and five blocks. Rylie Rosenkrantz totaled one kill, 11 digs and 34 assists and Sophie Kuntz had eight digs and two aces while Arden Sponsky finished with seven digs and one ace.

"I think all the girls stepped up in their roles," Strefling said. "Sarah being able to play six rotations, do it effectively and keep control of the team and court, she stood out by doing that today. Our defense stepped up, from Sophie and then Arden and just everybody kind of started to pick up that tip. That was a big deal because that's what we were weak at."

The season ends for a Buchanan team that won its fifth straight conference title with a largely new cast of players. Buchanan will graduate seniors Holt, Haylee Legault, Fanslow, Kenzie Boller, Denison and Adi Dombrowski. Key returners for the Bucks include Carson, Kehoe, Cora Weinberg and Weldy.

"What will stick with me the most is all the fun we had together – especially the team bonding and laughter during practices," Bender said. "We worked hard, supported each other and made every moment count. I'm so proud of how far we've come and how strong we finished the season. We ended on such a high note and I couldn't be prouder of this team."

Jeff Douglas / For Leader Publications
Ella Laskowski (2) strikes the ball during Wednesday's Division 2 district semifinal matchup with Buchanan.

Back-to-back

Maxwell Harden / Leader Publications
The Niles volleyball team poses with its Division 2 district championship trophy.

Niles beats Edwardsburg in 5-set thriller for second straight district title

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

BUCHANAN — The Niles volleyball team knew it was better than what it showed in its regular season loss to Edwardsburg and wanted to prove it Thursday night with a district title on the line.

The Vikings avenged its regular season loss to the Eddies, winning a 3-2 (25-22,15-25,25-23,18-25,15-10) thriller to hoist their second straight district championship.

"We came out and we knew the competition we had at hand. We did not take it lightly," said Niles Assistant Coach Lashonda Greene, who along with fellow assistant Gabby Kirkendol stepped up for head coach Abbie Harpenau, who was out of town for a work meeting. "We came out playing our game. We fell short a little bit at times but we came back and picked it up. We knew there was no way we'd win if we got down on ourselves. The ladies who went out there had great energy for most of the game. They played smart and were able to win districts tonight, so I'm proud of them."

"I'm definitely excited," said Niles senior Maddie Zache, who led the team in digs with 19. "It was unexpected. Coming into this, I knew we had to play hard because they have three D1 commits. It was definitely very exciting to be able to pull off that win."

Tied 2-2 entering the fifth set, the Vikings retook control, jumping out to a 10-5 lead before

Nyla Hover called game with a district title-clinching kill for point 15. The senior finished with 13 kills and 13 digs.

"We were just focused on our mental game against their mental game, to be honest," Zache said. "Whoever decides to show up, whoever decides to have a good mentality – you could tell their energy dropped, and we kept our energy high."

While Harpenau was unable to coach in person, Greene said she prepared a game plan in advance for the team to execute.

"She was on FaceTime the whole game," Greene said. "We called her; she's up to date with everything—she is the head coach, of course, and she's done a great job."

Greene, who is also a track coach, was excited to win districts, calling it a major accomplishment for the team.

"It meant a lot to me," she said. "To come out here and win districts is something I am so excited for. I'm proud of the team and proud of myself for stepping in while the head coach was gone. It was just a fun experience and a great way to end the district."

Tanaya Brown had nine kills and Braelyn Benjamin tallied seven kills while Neriah Stephens added seven Kills and five blocks. Mena Hover finished with 34 assists and four aces.

When it came to keys to the game, Greene highlighted the team's serve receive and passers as difference makers.

"Our passers did what they were supposed to do tonight," she said. "We were able to run plays, we were able to run our sets, our hitters were able to get kills. I feel like our serve receive and our passers came through in a major way tonight. I think they should be recognized along with the other players who played their parts. The majority of the passes were on point and we were able to work off them."

For Zache, the team's energy level was pivotal in picking up the win.

"Our energy was definitely the reason why we stayed in there and were able to beat them," she said.

For Edwardsburg, Sarah Pippin tallied 19 kills, 11 digs and two aces and Ella Laskowski had 14 kills, 10 digs and one block while Rylie Rosenkrantz added 50 assists, three aces and six digs.

Mya Eberlein had 10 kills and four blocks, Sophie Kuntz totaled 13 digs and two aces, Kya Shier finished with five digs, one block and five kills and Shelby Laubach added eight kills and two blocks.

"We knew we had to come in and fight," said Edwardsburg coach Sarah Strefling. "Niles has beaten a handful of really good teams this season and I knew it wouldn't be an easy win. I'm not making excuses, but we had a couple of sick players and players who aren't used to playing under this type of pressure. It's heartbreaking because we have four seniors, and they don't get another opportunity to do this. That is heartbreaking. There are no words to say to fix it."

Strefling praised the four seniors – Sarah Pippin, Khaylin Homan, Morgan Huff and Mya Eberlein – for leaving a "big legacy" and establishing a strong team culture.

"Sarah Pippin has been with us for four years; she's been a great player, will certainly be missed, but we'll still watch her play at the next level," Strefling said. "Mya has been with us for three years and is playing at the next level. Then we have Caitlin and Morgan, who worked hard daily. Morgan had a knee injury at the beginning of the season, so she never got much opportunity this year.

"The culture established by the seniors this year has spoken volumes," Strefling said. "It was an enjoyable time, and that wasn't always the case. It's heartbreaking because the culture and what they represented was so positive."

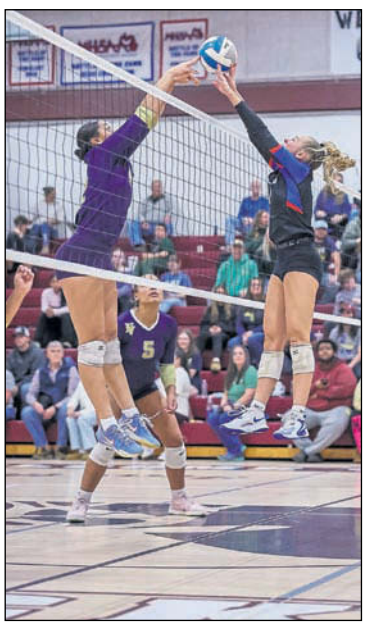
While the seniors will be missed, Strefling is optimistic about the program's future. The Eddies will return eight juniors in what figures to be another strong senior class in 2027.

Our junior class is a big, athletically talented group. We are spoiled with them. We just have to find a leader and have that leader step up – someone who can carry the team – which unfortunately wasn't present tonight.

The Vikings (16-16) advance to face Parma Western at 7 p.m. Tuesday in regional play at Charlotte High School. To keep winning, Greene said the Vikings must maintain their mentality and focus on role execution.

"Coming onto the court knowing there is a role that needs to be played, and knowing your role and executing your role," Greene said. "Every player is not supposed to do everything; they have a role, and that's what they're supposed to do. As long as we come out knowing we're supposed to be playing our role like we did tonight, and execute the plays we ask of them, then we will go pretty far. When we play our game, we're unstoppable."

"It feels amazing," Zache said. "None of us expected that we could go this far. With us playing like this, I think we can take it to state."



Jeff Douglas / For Leader Publications
Niles' Nariyah Jones and Edwardsburg's Rylie Rosenkrantz joust during Thursday's D2 district final in Buchanan.

Brandywine volleyball falls in the district semis

By MAXWELL HARDEN
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CASSOPOLIS — The Brandywine Bobcats volleyball team was eliminated from the Division 3 district tournament after falling to the Constantine Falcons in its semifinal matchup.

The Bobcats (12-30-1) started strong by winning the first game 25-19. In back-and-forth games 2, 3, and 4, the Falcons outlasted Brandywine with scores of 25-21, 25-15, and 25-23.

Zaya Price led the team with 24 kills, 17 digs, and one ace and Mackenna Price had 24 assists, nine digs and four blocks. Taytum Richards finished with 10 kills and five digs while Bradie Linley added five kills.

The back row defense was anchored by Macy Pellow with 21 digs and Addison Anglin with 18 digs. Layla Covington added two kills and two blocks while Kaegan Vansandt tallied five assists, seven digs, and one ace.

"I would like to thank all of my players for all their hard work and dedication this season," said Brandywine coach Jim Ragosta. "These young ladies are in the gym every night during the season. The amount of improvement individually and as a team is amazing. This season may be over but the rise of Brandywine volleyball is just beginning."

Dowagiac volleyball falls to Niles

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

BUCHANAN — The Dowagiac volleyball team's season has come to an end.

The Chieftains fell to Niles 18-25,17-25,25-20,16-25 Wednesday in Division 2 district semifinal play at Buchanan High School.

Marlie Carpenter totaled eight kills, seven aces and two blocks and Riley Todd had 13 kills, two aces and two blocks while Claire Hess added 13 assists and nine digs. Hanah McCuddy had 16 assists and Tessa Deering had 19 digs, two aces and one block while Emily Henry had four kills and Briana Campbell four kills and one block. Zabrina Shivers added eight digs and Ava Nate had one block.

"I thought we did really well," said Dowagiac coach Amber Todd. "We knew coming into it that we were going to have to work and they're a great team. They put balls away and they're scrappy but I thought my girls responded really well. We served aggressively at times but I think at times too, we missed too many serves at crucial points. I'm proud of how we played. We didn't give up on anything."

See **DOWAGIAC**, page B2

Cassopolis volleyball earns the SW10 title

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

CASSOPOLIS — The Cassopolis Lady Rangers varsity volleyball team ended its successful season Monday in a hard-fought Division 3 district opener, falling to rival Brandywine 21-25, 23-25, 22-25.

The team celebrated a major milestone this season, capturing the Southwest 10 Conference Title. Led by first-year Head Coach Linda Martin, the team transformed itself from finishing in the middle of the pack last year into reigning champions through what Martin referred to as "grit, teamwork, and relentless pursuit of excellence."

Martin said the team's success was built on daily practices, offseason training and a strong focus on communication and culture building. Key performances throughout the season came from Tori Burks, Ryley Bowsher, Jamya Hart, Jordin Heiman, Brooklyn Smith, and Alessa Blanchard, but the program emphasized that the group's unity ultimately made the difference.

"They've grown not just as athletes, but as leaders and teammates," Martin said. "Winning the conference is a reflection of all the work they've put in."

Martin is excited for what the future holds.

"The community of Cassopolis and Cassopolis Public Schools is unparalleled," she said. "The staff, parents, players and administration have been so welcoming. The student support at home and away matches has been consistent for the entire season. We are grateful for the opportunity to compete and represent Ross Beatty High School. Our future looks bright."

Photo provided

The Cassopolis volleyball team earned the Southwest 10 Conference championship this season.

Zeeland West slips past Niles 30-21 in D3 playoff opener

By MAXWELL HARDEN
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NILES — It is not every day when a defending state champion meets a state-runner up finisher in the first round of postseason play, and yet, that is exactly what happened Friday when Zeeland West faced Niles in Division 3 pre-district play.

The 2024 Division 4 runner-up Vikings turned the ball over four times and allowed 16 fourth quarter points from the defending Division 3 champs en route to a 30-21 loss in a Halloween showdown at Viking Stadium, capping Niles' season with a 9-1 record.

"I told the team only one team escapes this thing alive, so everybody loses somewhere," said Niles Coach Scot Shaw. "I think if we take away a couple of mistakes, we had a chance. We hurt ourselves with those mistakes."

After taking a 7-0 lead on a 7-yard Elijah Norris run and Ben Bruckner extra point, the Vikings (9-1) appeared to be driving toward another score when a Will Turnbull pass was intercepted by Logan Nash and gave the Dux (7-3) some momentum.

Zeeland West, the defending Division 3 state champion, marched down the field, using up the remainder of the first quarter and nearly four minutes of the second quarter before scoring on a 7-yard Brandon Holman run with 8:17 left in the first half to take an 8-7 lead following a two-point conversion.

"They were rolling their safeties and I think if the safety from the other side hadn't dropped, Brenden would've been in a better position to go get the ball, but they're good. Their defensive backs have been very good all year… You can't recover from mistakes like that against a good team."

On the ensuing kickoff, a Niles fumble was recovered by the Dux on the Niles 45-yard line. The Dux advanced to the Niles 22-yard line before the Vikings defense bowed up and forced a turnover on downs. The momentum the defense generated carried over to the offense, who capped an 8-play, 72-yard scoring drive with a 1-yard Norris touchdown. Norris' successful two-point conversion allowed the Vikings to take a 15-8 lead with 2:05 left in a half. The Vikings would have one more shot at points before a Turnbull pass was intercepted just before halftime.

The Dux received the ball to start the second half. Holman found the end zone on a touchdown drive that ate 7:10 off the clock but a failed two-point try meant the Vikings retained its lead at 15-14 with 5:50 left in the third quarter.

The Vikings would answer right back with a touchdown drive of its own, capped by a 3-yard Brandon Walsh run to go up 21-14 with 1:05 left in the third. The Vikings opted to go for two and were unsuccessful but an offsides penalty called on Zeeland West gave the Vikings another chance. Niles went for two a second time but the run was stuffed short of the goal line.

Zeeland West had an answer on its next possession, this time through the air as the Dux caught the Niles defense off guard with a 42-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Parker Albrecht to Marshall Johnson. The Dux went for two and Albrecht found Holman on a conversion pass to give the Dux a 22-21 lead with 10:09 in the fourth.

The Vikings would not get a chance to immediately respond, as a fumble on the ensuing kickoff was recovered by the Dux. The Vikings defense would hold with a Brandon Hamilton stop on fourth down but a three-and-out gave the ball back to the Dux, who finished off an eight-play drive with a Jonah Leslie touchdown to put the Dux up 28-21. Holman converted the two-point conversion run to bring the game to its final score.

"Offensively, we played pretty well," Shaw said. "Defensively, we played well early. They don't lose many football games. They've established themselves as being very big and coming off the ball well. It's a shame that two teams that played on Thanksgiving weekend last year have to meet in the first round of the playoffs this year. It's an even bigger shame we couldn't get it done."

The pomp and circumstance that usually follows Vikings home games was nowhere to be found, instead replaced with a bittersweet farewell to the most successful senior class in Niles football history.

The Class of 2026 concludes its football story with the most wins in program history (37), three consecutive Wolverine Conference championships, two district championships, one regional championship and a state runner-up finish.

After addressing the team after the game, Shaw embraced each senior individuality, thanking them for their roles in transforming the Vikings program into one of Southwest Michigan's best.

"Last year's seniors and this year's seniors were very important parts of it," Shaw said. "It's been a long time since I've played a game without Brandon Hamilton and Chase Chase Brawley out there. We had a lot of guys contribute over the years and just their leadership… Our young kids really got to step up because those two are exceptional leaders for sure and a lot of our other senior class members turned into great leaders as well."

While the 2026 class will be tough to replace, Shaw is confident in the talent and skill returning next year, which includes players like Will Turnbull, Brogan Lake, Max Rucker, Brandon Walsh, Bryce Zache, Vaughn Asmus and Ben Bruckner.

We have a lot coming back," Shaw said. "We have a lot of guys who can play football. We don't have a lot of guys with varsity experience, but [Turnbull] has improved immensely since the beginning of the season. That's what I'm most excited about, coming into next year having an experienced quarterback. This was a huge game and he played pretty well.

It's also important that all those kids coming back – the sophomores and juniors we're counting on – get in the weight room and keep this thing going. It's up to them now."

Nick Shelton / For Leader Publications

Elijah Norris (24) plunges into the end zone for the Vikings.

Edwardsburg loses to Vicksburg 43-30

By SCOTT HASSINGER
For Leader Publications

EDWARDSBURG — Vicksburg's passing attack gave host Edwardsburg fits to say the least in Friday's 43-30 Division 4 playoff win at Leo Hoffman Stadium.

The Bulldogs, who also topped the Eddies 38-35 in the regular-season matchup between the two Wolverine Conference foes, improved to 6-4 and advanced to host Three Rivers (6-4) in next Friday's district championship at 7 p.m.

Edwardsburg sophomore halfback Giovanni Orue scored twice in the third quarter on runs of five and one yard to help the Eddies (6-4) erase a 21-8 halftime deficit and grab a 22-21 lead with 5:23 left in the period. Sophomore place-kicker Logan Kovach was successful on both of the Eddies' PATs.

The Eddies' momentum was short-lived, however, as Vicksburg went back in front 29-22 on Easton Moughton's 11-yard scoring toss to Maguire Bowles with 3:11 left in the third.

Vicksburg increased its advantage to 36-22 with 11:21 left in the fourth quarter on Moughton's seven-yard TD pass to Travis Hostetler. Senior Mitchell Beyer booted both PATs for the Bulldogs after each of those scores.

"We couldn't sustain that lead due to the same kind of lack of consistency that we've shown all season. There have been moments this year that we have looked really good and at other times we stall out. This team just couldn't afford to not play with great effort all the time," Edwardsburg head coach Dan Purlee said.

The Bulldogs would find the endzone one more time with 5:22 to go in the contest on Moughton's 34-yard scoring toss to Hostetler. Beyer added the final PAT.

Edwardsburg's final score of the contest came on senior fullback Alex Rudolph's four-yard blast. Myers added the conversion run.

Vicksburg got a pair of first-quarter TDs to build themselves an early 14-0 advantage. Moughton hooked up twice on scoring tosses of 10 and 33 yards to Hostetler. Beyer booted both PATs.

Cameron Hayden raced 15 yards to score for the Eddies and junior quarterback Ryland Savoie added the two-point conversion run to lessen his team's deficit to 14-8 with 0:27 left in the second quarter.

Vicksburg quickly went to the air and scored as time expired in the half with Moughton, who ended the night with five TD throws and over 300 yards passing, perfectly threading a 53-yard scoring pass into the hands of his junior receiver Graham Kubiak. Beyer added the PAT to give his team a 13-point halftime cushion.

Vicksburg head coach Tom Marchese was elated to get this latest win over Edwardsburg.

"We trust our quarterback and three top receivers a great deal. Our receivers made some catches that were unbelievable tonight. Getting an early 14-0 lead on them (Eddies) was very important for us," Marchese said. "That TD catch at the end of the half was critical for us and kept up our momentum entering halftime. Then Edwardsburg came out and took it too us a bit in that third quarter, but our kids rose up and responded well the remainder of the game. We just regrouped and made some big plays to get the lead back," Marchese said.

Edwardsburg gained 233 yards on the ground with Cale Myers churning out 88 on 12 carries. Orue added 70 yards in 19 attempts for the Eddies.

Savoie completed 3-of-6 passes worth 69 yards.

Edwardsburg was led defensively by Caden DeHart with eight tackles and one pass deflection. Ian Hanson added seven stops for the Eddies while Chase Bessinger racked up four tackles and a pass deflection. Luke Harman had a quarterback sack for Edwardsburg.

The Eddies, who will return 38 players off its 42-man roster, bid goodbye to four seniors in Rudolph, Myers, Cody Heidt and Adam Wright.

"It was a small group of seniors. I give those guys credit for sticking it out these four years. They really grew up this year and showed a lot of leadership. I appreciate everyone on this team for coming out here and working hard. Football is difficult and we have high expectations for our program. It's not an easy sport to play so I'm just proud of our seniors for continuing to put in that hard work," Purlee said.

Buchanan's season ends in playoffs to Napoleon

By MAXWELL HARDEN
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NAPOLEON — The Buchanan football team's season came to an end Friday night.

The Bucks fell to Napoleon 26-20 in Division 6 pre-district play at Napoleon High School.

The Pirates (7-3) jumped out to an early 14-0 lead with two rushing touchdowns (1-yard and 27-yard runs) before Ryan Hickok scored for Buchanan (6-4) on a 1-yard run (conversion failed), making the score 14-6 entering halftime. In the third quarter, Brody Reed returned a kickoff 72 yards for a touchdown (conversion failed) to cut the deficit to 14-12 before Napoleon responded with a 47-yard rushing touchdown to take a 20-12 lead.

Napoleon scored again on a 15-yard run to make the score 26-12 in the fourth. The Bucks would not go quietly, as Reed scored his second special teams touchdown on a 60-yard kickoff return (2PC good) to round out the scoring.

The Pirates (7-3) outgained Buchanan (6-4) in total offense 275 to 149 yards, including a 266 to 133 edge in rushing yards.

Max Cornelius led the Bucks with 61 rushing yards on 15 carries and Hickok rushed for 33 yards and one touchdown on seven carries while Reed tallied 139 return yards and two touchdowns on two kickoff returns. Cy Carlin completed 3 of 11 passes for 16 yards and Owen Thompson led the receivers with two catches for nine yards. Defensively, Matthew Stines-Vancourt led the Bucks with four solo tackles and three assists.

BERRIEN SPRINGS BEATS DOWAGIAC

Tanya Hagen / For Leader Publications

The Dowagiac football team's season came to an end Friday, Oct. 31 with a 34-20 loss to Berrien Springs. The Chieftains finish the season with a 5-4 record and a tri-share of the Lakeland Conference title.

DOWAGIAC

From page B1

After dropping the first two sets, the Chieftains regrouped in the third set to keep their season alive.

"They were just fighting and putting balls away," Todd said. "We were making smarter decisions on offense. I really think Riley Todd stepped it up. She was putting balls away. She was hard to block and read at times. She was a big contributor to our success in those sets."

"A lot of it was our energy and our intensity," said Niles Coach Abbie Harpenau. "They got a little frazzled and it's kind of a hard funk to get out of, but they ended up pulling it out just a little too late, unfortunately. But we came out on top, and that's all that matters."

The Chieftains will miss the services of seniors Tatiyana Lara, Deering, McCuddy, Carpenter, Nate, Todd and Shivers but will return key players in Campbell, Nadia Poorman, Hess and Henry.

"This year's group is a group I've had since eighth grade," Todd said. I've had them for a while and they couldn't pass 10 balls in a row so we've come very far. I'm proud of the progress we've made in such a short period of time with a lot of girls who had never played volleyball before."

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Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Brandon L. Petersheim, married man
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Ruoff Mortgage Company, Inc.
Date of Mortgage: June 6, 2023
Date of Mortgage Recording: June 7, 2023
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $205,382.31
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Village of Cassopolis, Cass County, Michigan, and described as: Commencing at the East quarter post of Section 35, Town 6 South, Range 15 West; thence South 5 rods; thence West 18 rods; thence North 5 rods; thence East 18 rods to the place of beginning. EXCEPT the West 8 rods thereof.
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If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
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(248) 642-2515
1575157 (10-25)(11-15)

SILVER CREEK TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING AND MEETING NOTICE

TO: THE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF THE TOWNSHIP OF SILVER CREEK, CASS COUNTY, MICHIGAN, AND ANY OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS:
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Silver Creek Township Planning Commission will hold a public hearing and meeting on December 3, 2025, commencing at 7:00 p.m. at the Silver Creek Township Hall, 32764 Dixon Street, Dowagiac, MI 49047, within the Township.
PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the item(s) to be considered at said meeting are as follows:
· The request of Amelia Distefano for special land use and site plan approval in order to permit the operation of a horse-riding stable/equine boarding and teaching facility on the property 33684 Silver St., Dowagiac, MI 49047 (Parcel No. 14-130-018-005-00). The property is improved with a 60' x 100' barn and indoor riding arena. The site plan shows a 75' x 120' outdoor riding arena and a 50' x 50' gravel parking lot to accommodate not more than 10 vehicles. The property is located in the AR Agricultural Residential District Zoning Classification and consists of 110 acres. General Special Land Use considerations for the Planning Commission are contained in Section 14.03 of the Township Zoning Ordinance. Special land use considerations for the proposed use are contained in Section 155.151 of the Zoning Ordinance. Site plan review standards are contained in Section155.05 of the Township Zoning Ordinance.
· Such other and further matters as may properly come before the planning commission.
Anyone interested in reviewing the application for the above or the Township Zoning Ordinance may examine a copy of the same at the Silver Creek Township Hall during regular business hours of regular business days hereafter until noon on the date of the hearing and may further examine the same at said public hearing/meeting. The Township Zoning Ordinance is also accessible via internet at www.silvercreektwpmi.org.
Written comments will be received from any interested persons concerning the foregoing by the Silver Creek Township Clerk at the Township Hall at any time during regular business hours up to the date of the hearing and may be further received by the Planning Commission at the hearing.
All interested persons are invited to be present at the aforesaid time and place.
Silver Creek Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed material being considered at the hearing, to individuals with disabilities at the hearing upon four (4) days' notice to the Silver Creek Township Clerk. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Silver Creek Township Clerk at the address or telephone number listed below.
SILVER CREEK TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
By: Jess Honn, Township Clerk
32764 Dixon St., Dowagiac, MI 49047
Phone: (269) 424-3025 email: www.silvercreektwpmi.org

2026-2029 Tribal Transportation Improvement Program (TTIP)
The Pokagon Band has developed a draft Tribal Transportation Improvement Program (TTIP). The draft TTIP identifies and prioritizes transportation projects proposed for the next 4 years and provides planning level cost estimates for those projects.
Priorities are based upon the 2026 funding for the Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) as allocated by Congress and will change from year to year based upon a variety of factors.
Copies of the draft TTIP are available at the Pokagon Band Department of Housing & Community Development Offices, at 57824 Potawatomi Trail, Dowagiac, Michigan 49047, or by e-mailing a request for a copy to: Robert.Torzynski@PokagonBand-nsn.gov.
Questions regarding the draft Pokagon Band TTIP may be addressed to Pokagon Band Planning Manager, Robert Torzynski, at (269) 782-4896 or by email at the address provided above.
The public is entitled and encouraged to review the draft TTIP and respond in writing at the above provided e-mail address. Comments will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. Monday, November 10, 2025.
October 25, 2025

Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM, on December 10, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information: Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Stanley William Davis, a married man Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns Foreclosing Assignee (if any): PennyMac Loan Services LLC Date of Mortgage: July 23, 2004 Date of Mortgage Recording: July 29, 2004 Amount claimed due on date of notice: $56,079.43 Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in City of Dowagiac, Cass County, Michigan, and described as: Lot(s) 2 of BURMAX PARK, according to the Plat thereof recorded in Liber 1-E of Plats, Page(s) 271 of Cass County Records. Common street address (if any): 27919 Burmax Park, Dowagiac, MI 49047-9644 The redemption period shall be 1 year from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: November 8, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145, Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1576401 (11-08)(11-29)

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in CASS County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM, on November 19, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE INFORMATION: Default has been made in the conditions of a certain mortgage made by William L. Smiley, a single person, whose address is 14260 M. 60 Highway, Jones, Michigan 49061, as original Mortgagors, to Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., being a mortgage dated February 8, 2010, and recorded on February 22, 2010 in Liber 1007 Page 22, Cass County Records, State of Michigan and then assigned to NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing, as assignee as documented by an assignment dated July 9, 2025 and recorded on July 9, 2025 in Liber 1262 Page 1415, Cass County Records, Michigan, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of THIRTY-ONE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED SEVENTY-ONE AND 59/100 DOLLARS ($31,571.59). Said premises are situated in the Township of Newberg, County of Cass, State of Michigan, and are described as: ALL THAT CERTAIN PARCEL OF LAND SITUATED IN TOWNSHIP OF NEWBERG, CASS COUNTY, STATE OF MICHIGAN, BEING KNOWN AND DESIGNATED AS FROM THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SECTION 32, TOWN 6 SOUTH, RANGE 13 WEST, MEASURE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 52 MINUTES 58 SECONDS WEST ALONG THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SECTION 1211.50 FEET, THENCE MEASURE SOUTH 0 DEGREES 47 MINUTES 54 SECONDS EAST 937.74 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING OF THE LAND HEREIN DESCRIBED; THENCE CONTINUING SOUTH 0 DEGREES 47 MINUTES 54 SECONDS EAST 43.26 FEET; THENCE EAST 152.00 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 0 DEGREES 47 MINUTES 54 SECONDS EAST 253.43 FEET TO THE CENTER LINE OF STATE HIGHWAY M 60; THENCE NORTH 82 DEGREES 53 MINUTES 16 SECONDS WEST ALONG SAID CENTER LINE 376.92 FEET; THENCE NORTH 2 DEGREES 37 MINUTES 07 SECONDS EAST 184.14 FEET; THENCE NORTH 10 DEGREES 37 MINUTES 41 SECONDS EAST 38.94 FEET; THENCE NORTH 67 DEGREES 51 MINUTES 59 SECONDS EAST 72.96 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 52 MINUTES 41 SECONDS EAST 134.71 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. SUBJECT TO THAT PORTION ALONG THE SOUTHERLY SIDE THEREOF AS BEING USED FOR HIGHWAY PURPOSES. ALSO SUBJECT TO ANY EASEMENTS OR RESTRICTIONS OF RECORD. BY FEE SIMPLE DEED FROM TROTT & TROTT PC, AS ATTORNEY-IN-FACT FOR FEDERAL NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION. AS SET FORTH IN BOOK 985 PAGE 976 DATED 10/30/2008 AND RECORDED 11/04/2008, CASS COUNTY RECORDS. STATE OF MICHIGAN. Street Address: 14260 M. 60 Highway, Jones, Michigan 49061 The redemption period shall be 12 months from the date of such sale, unless the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA § 600.3241a in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of the sale. If the property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCLA § 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. THIS FIRM IS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION WE OBTAIN WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: IF YOU ARE A MILITARY SERVICE MEMBER ON ACTIVE DUTY, IF YOUR PERIOD OF ACTIVE DUTY HAS CONCLUDED LESS THAN 90 DAYS AGO, OR IF YOU HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO ACTIVE DUTY, PLEASE CONTACT THE ATTORNEY FOR THE PARTY FORECLOSING THE MORTGAGE AT THE TELEPHONE NUMBER STATED IN THIS NOTICE. Dated: October 18, 2025, For more information, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing: Robert A. Blumberg (P87490), Johnson, Blumberg, & Associates, LLC, 30 North LaSalle St., Suite 3650 Chicago, Illinois, 60602. Telephone: (312) 541-9710 File No.: MI 25 6766

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SECTION 001113
ADVERTISEMENT TO BID

1.01 PROJECT NAME:
A. Zollar Building – Partial Roof Improvements
1.02 PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
A. This project consists of a partial roof replacement to the Charles O. Zollar Building at Southwestern Michigan College. This replacement will be a full tear off of the existing roof and will replace it with a KEE roof membrane system with insulation to achieve an R-value of R-30.
1.03 OWNER:
A. Southwestern Michigan College
58900 Cherry Grove Road
Dowagiac, Michigan 49047
1.04 ARCHITECT:
A. CARMI Design Group
210 E. Main Street, Suite 200
P.O. Box 487
Niles, MI 49120
Phone: 269-663-5073
1.05 BID DATE:
A. Bids will be received at the Student Service Center on the Niles Campus of Southwestern Michigan College until 7:45 AM (local time) on Wednesday November 12, 2025. Bids received after this time will not be considered and will be returned to the bidder unopened. Niles Campus: 33890 US Hwy 12, Niles, MI 49120
B. Bids will be publicly opened at a special meeting of the College's Board of Trustees at 8:00 AM on November 12, 2025, in the Student Service Center on the Niles Campus and read aloud at this time. Niles Campus: 33890 US Hwy 12, Niles, MI 49120
C. Bids shall be properly and completely executed on the Bid Proposal Form included within the Project Manual and submitted in duplicate. Bids shall be clearly marked as "SMC Zollar Building Roof Improvements" on the front of the submitted envelope.
1.06 PRE-BID MEETING:
A. A Mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting will be held on October 29, 2025, at 2:30 PM (local time) at the main entrance of the Charles O. Zollar Building on the Dowagiac campus. Bidders will then have the opportunity to walk the Zollar Building roof.
1.07 DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY AND USE:
A. Bid Documents may be viewed at the following Plan Rooms on or after October 23, 2025.
1. Builders Exchange of Kalamazoo www.builder-exchange.com
2. Builders Exchange of Lansing www.bxlansing.com
3. Builders Exchange of Michigan www.grbx.com
4. Construction Association of Michigan www.BuildwithCAM.com
5. ConstructConnect www.constructconnect.com
6. Dodge Construction Network www.construction.com
7. MACIAF (South Bend, IN) www.constructionsite.org
B. Bidding documents are available electronically at no charge, via email. Please email your request to cadmin@carmi.biz.
C. Contact cadmin@carmi.biz, with bidding questions. Please cc: tanner@carmi.biz
1.08 BONDS:
A. A five percent (5%) Bid Bond shall accompany each bid. The successful bidder will be required to provide a Performance Bond, Labor and Material Bonds, and certificates of Liability and Worker's Compensation Insurance.
1.09 OTHER CONDITIONS AND INFORMATION:
A. Each bid shall be accompanied by a sworn and notarized statement disclosing any familial relationship that exists between the owner or any employee of the bidder and any member of the Southwestern Michigan College Board of Trustees or the president of the college.
B. No bidder may withdraw their bid for a period of **Thirty (30) calendar days** after the date set for bid opening.
C. Public Act 517 of 2012 (effective December 31, 2012) enacted the "Iran Economic Sanctions Act", which prevents "Iran linked businesses" from submitting a bid on a request for proposals (RFP) with a public entity. This law requires that persons submitting bids certify that they are not an "Iran linked business," which is defined as either:
1. A person engaging in investment activities in the energy sector of Iran, including a person that provides oil or liquefied natural gas tankers or products used to construct or maintain pipelines used to transport oil or liquefied natural gas for the energy sector of Iran; or
2. A financial institution that extends credit to another person, if that person will use the credit to engage in investment activities in the energy sector of Iran.
D. Southwestern Michigan College reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defects or irregularities in bids, and to accept any bid that is deemed most advantageous to the public interest.

Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM on DECEMBER 3, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Jerry L. Parker and Theresa Hart, husband and wife, to Fifth Third Bank (Western Michigan), Mortgagee, dated March 13, 2009, and recorded April 24, 2009, in Liber 993, Page 913 Cass County Records, Michigan. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of One Hundred Forty-Six Thousand One Hundred Eight and 89/100 Dollars ($146,108.89).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Cass County, Michigan at 10:00 AM on DECEMBER 3, 2025.
Said premises are located in the City of Jones, Cass County Michigan, and are described as:
PART OF THE WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 35, TOWN 6 SOUTH, RANGE 13 WEST, DESCRIBED AS: BEGINNING AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 35; THENCE WEST ALONG THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID SECTION, 463.86 FEET; THENCE NORTH 12°08' EAST, 152.05 FEET; THENCE NORTH 77°52' WEST, 30.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH 12°08' EAST, 361.29 FEET; THENCE NORTH 65°29' WEST, 296.92 FEET TO THE CENTER LINE OF STATE HIGHWAY M-40; THENCE NORTH 12°08' EAST, ALONG SAID CENTERLINE, 428.88 FEET; THENCE ALONG SAID CENTERLINE ON A CURVE TO THE LEFT, 510.20 FEET TO A POINT 44.00 FEET SOUTHERLY ALONG SAID CENTERLINE FROM THE NORTHERLY LINE OF THE MICHIGAN CENTRAL RAILROAD (NOW ABANDONED); THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY TO A POINT ON THE EAST LINE OF THE WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION WHICH IS NORTH 0°39' WEST, 1455.50 FEET FROM THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF SAID WEST HALF; THENCE SOUTH 0°39' EAST ALONG SAID EAST LINE 1455.50 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.
61893 M 40, Jones, Michigan 49061
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period.
Dated: November 1, 2025
File No. 25-013121
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400
(11-01)(11-22)

0900 LEGALS

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
CASS COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO. and JUDGE
2025-237-DE
Carol M. Bealor

Court address Court telephone no.
60296 M-62 #6,
Cassopolis, MI 49031
(269) 445-4475

Estate of: Carolyn Goodman

TO ALL CREDITORS: **

NOTICE TO CREDITORS:
The decedent, Carolyn Goodman, died July 17, 2019. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Kelly Russell, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 60296 M-62 Ste 10, Cassopolis, MI 49031 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date October 27, 2025

Thav, Ryke & Langan
Jordan R. Smith P87095
Attorney name Bar no.
24725 W. 12 Mile Rd. Ste 110
Address
Southfield, MI 48034
City, state, zip
(248)945-1111
Telephone no.

Kelly Russell
Personal representative
1080 Wrens Gate
Address
Mundelein, IL 60060
City, state, zip
(312)961-8406
Telephone no.

WED DEC 10 @ NOON
Abandoned Vehicle Auction Auction
Location Millin Towing of 611 Wayne St Niles MI Register at 11:45am CASH ONLY!

2006 FORD ESCAPE SILVER
1FMYU93116KC74090

2010 CHEVROLET MALIBU BLUE 1G1ZB5EB5AF318535

2011 LINCOLN MKZ BLACK
3LNHL2JCXBR767755

2013 CHEVROLET MALIBU BLACK 1G11C5SA0DF335558

2014 NISSAN ALTIMA BLACK
1N4AL3AP4EC200674

2015 VOLKSWAGEN JETTA RED 3VWD17AJ3FM232397

2016 CHEVROLET EQUINOX BLUE 2GNALBEK6G6209432

2016 NISSAN SENTRA BLUE
3N1AB7AP3GY333069

2024 CHEVROLET MALIBU BLUE 1G1ZD5STXRF224170

Abandoned Vehicles sold as is with no guarantee! No knowledge about condition. All vehicles must be paid for and removed on the day of auction. Listing subject to change depending upon Secretary of State documentation and redemption. Millin Towing reserves the right to bid.

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
CASS COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO. and JUDGE
2025-238-DE
Carol M. Bealor

Court address Court telephone no.
60296 M-62 #6,
Cassopolis, MI 49031
(269) 445-4475

Estate of: Kristine Goodman

TO ALL CREDITORS: **

NOTICE TO CREDITORS:
The decedent, Kristine Goodman, died March 10, 2024. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Kelly Russell, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 60296 M-62 Ste 10, Cassopolis, MI 49031 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date October 27, 2025

Thav, Ryke & Langan
Jordan R. Smith P87095
Attorney name Bar no.
24725 W. 12 Mile Rd. Ste 110
Address
Southfield, MI 48034
City, state, zip
(248)945-1111
Telephone no.

Kelly Russell
Personal representative
1080 Wrens Gate
Address
Mundelein, IL 60060
City, state, zip
(312)961-8406
Telephone no.

Notice of Self Storage Sale
Please take notice Just Simple Storage - Menominee located at N710 County Rd 577, Menominee, MI, 49858 intends to hold an Auction of storage units in default of payment. The sale will occur as an Online auction via www.bid13.com on 11/20/2025 at 12:00 PM. Unless stated otherwise, the description of the contents are household goods, furnishings and garage essentials. Unit #48; Unit #8. This sale may be withdrawn at any time without notice.
7528-323366

Shawnee Mini-Storage and M-139 Storage
6681 US Highway 31
Berrien Springs, MI 49103

This notice is to inform the following tenants that full payment in credit card, cash or money order is due immediately. If full payment in credit card, cash or money order is not received By November 17, 2025, the contents of the units will be disposed by Shawnee Mini Storage.

M-139 Facility:
Betty Best Dixie Wong

1700 Smith Road Facility:
Anthony Smith Abigail Vavra
Matt Shepard Janet Adams

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
COUNTY OF Cass

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO. and JUDGE
2025-261-DE
Hon. Carol Montavon Bealor

Estate of: Elizabeth Jane Slabaugh
Date of birth: 02/08/1930

TO ALL CREDITORS: *

NOTICE TO CREDITORS:
The decedent, Elizabeth Jane Slabaugh, died 05/02/2019. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Blake Slabaugh, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 60296 M-62, Cassopolis, MI 49031 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date 11/05/2025

Heidi A. Duncan P76168
Attorney name Bar no.
107 Pennsylvania Ave
Address
Dowagiac, MI 49047
City, State, Zip
269-782-9895
Telephone no.

Blake Slabaugh
Personal representative
27026 Corwin Street
Address
Dowagiac, MI 49047
City, state, zip
269-235-2766
Telephone

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
COUNTY OF Cass

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO. and JUDGE
2025-282-DE

Estate of: Sharon Lovell
Date of birth: 08/09/1940

TO ALL CREDITORS: *

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, Sharon Lovell, died 09/06/2024. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Daniel Lovell, Jr., personal representative, or to both the probate court at 60296 M-62, Cassopolis, MI 49031 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date 10/28/2025

Nicholas Raymond Hogue P81291
Attorney name Bar no.
107 Pennsylvania Ave
Address
Dowagiac, MI 49047
City, State, Zip
269-782-9895
Telephone no.

Daniel Lovell, Jr.
Personal representative
265 Holt Dr. #2231
Address
Big Fork, MT 59911
City, state, zip
406-885-0337
Telephone

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
CASS COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO. and JUDGE
2025-275-DE

Court address Court telephone no.
60296 M-62
Cassopolis, MI 49031
(269) 445-4475

Estate of: Lonnie Allan McIntosh
Date of birth:* 06/23/943

TO ALL CREDITORS: **

NOTICE TO CREDITORS:
The decedent, Lonnie Allan McIntosh, died 12/29/2018. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Kristina Tollefson, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 60296 M-62, Cassopolis, MI 49031 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date October 28, 2025

Heidi Behnke P61546
Attorney name Bar no.
5145 Greenwater Dr
Address
Willis Tx 77318
City, state, zip
269-806-5875
Telephone no.

Kristina Tollefson
Personal representative
1506 W Marquette Woods
Address
St. Joseph MI. 49085
City, state, zip
269-876-2780
Telephone no.

Scarlett Towing is having an abandoned vehicle auction. Auction date 11/13/25 @ 8:00am Location: 7979 Deans Hill Rd, Berrien Center

2015 Hyundai Sonata
Vin: 5NPE34AF1FH238152

Vehicle unknown running condition and miles

Subscribe Today

269-687-7717

STATE OF MICHIGAN
PROBATE COURT
CASS COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Decedent's Estate

CASE NO. and JUDGE
2025-276-DE

Court address Court telephone no.
60296 M-62
Cassopolis, MI 49031
(269) 445-4475

Estate of: Linda Gay McIntosh
Date of birth:* 03/26/946

TO ALL CREDITORS: **

NOTICE TO CREDITORS:
The decedent, Linda Gay McIntosh, died 06/27/2025. Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Kristina Tollefson, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 60296 M-62, Cassopolis, MI 49031 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

Date October 28, 2025

Heidi Behnke P61546
Attorney name Bar no.
5145 Greenwater Dr
Address
Willis Tx 77318
City, state, zip
269-806-5875
Telephone no.

Kristina Tollefson
Personal representative
1506 W Marquette Woods
Address
St. Joseph MI. 49085
City, state, zip
269-876-2780
Telephone no.

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Battle Creek, MI 49037
(269) 963-5588

101 Robinson St.
Dowagiac, MI 49047
(269) 782-5134

gunbroker@uslumbercompany.com

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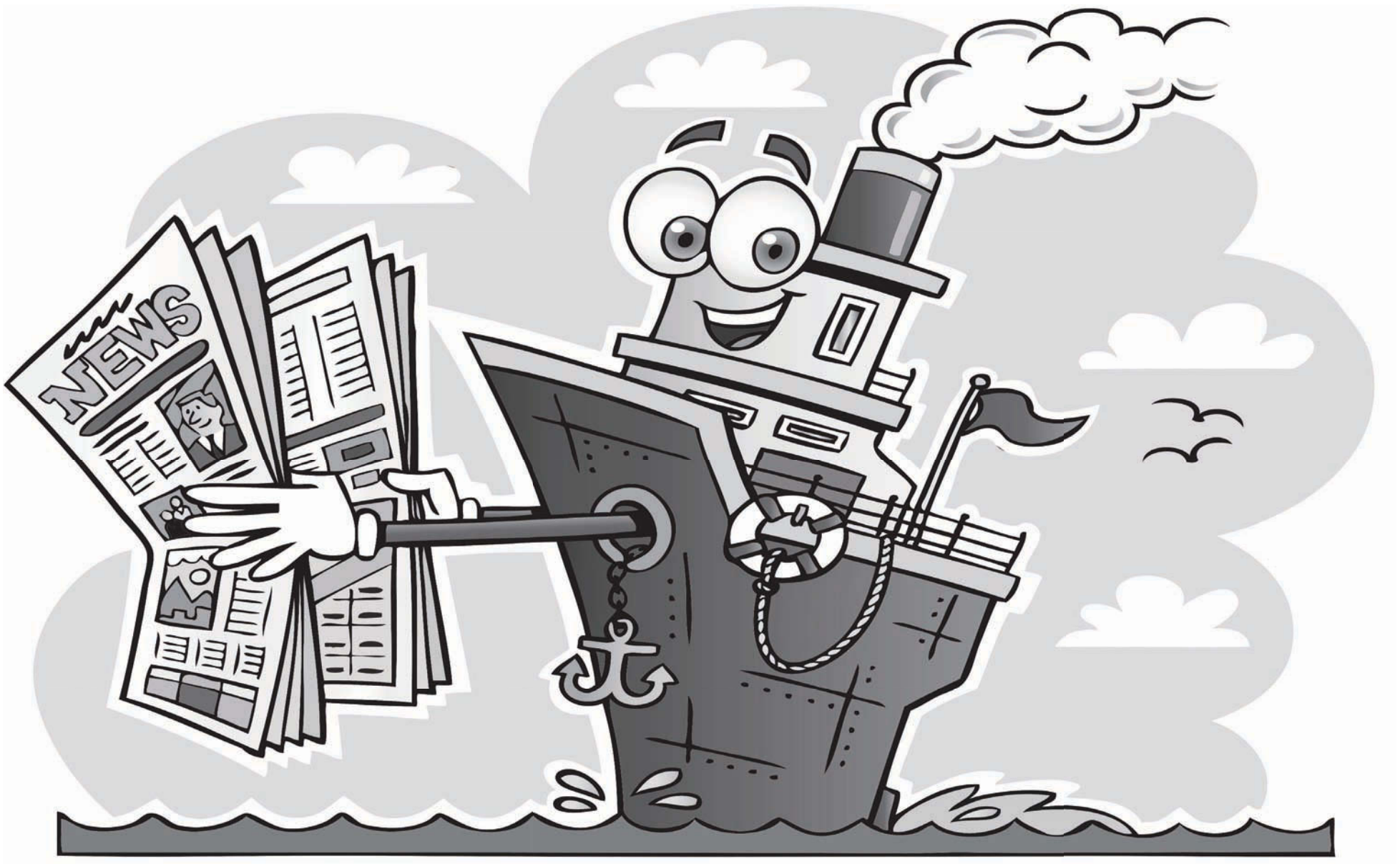
Winter is coming!



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OUTDOORS

Michigan DNR photo / Matthew Clara

Visitors to Milliken State Park in Detroit can use an EnChroma colorblind scenic viewer along the riverwalk.

Fall color for all

More Michigan state parks home to special viewers for colorblindness

By HEATHER JOHNSON DUROCHER
Michigan DNR

Bill and Edie McKnight's decades-long dedication to their local state park has meant spending as much time as possible on its 26 miles of trails, while also giving back as original members of Friends of Maybury State Park in Northville.

And while the long-married Novi couple doesn't visit Maybury as often these days, the park remains an unforgettable place they'll forever cherish.

"With all the walking and the cross-country skiing we did over the years, you could drop us down in that state park with our eyes closed and we'd know where we were," said Bill McKnight, 86.

More recently, something other than Maybury's pathways is inspiring McKnight to come back to his beloved park. The spot is now home to two colorblind scenic viewers, an amenity allowing McKnight and others like him who live with red-green colorblindness to see color more clearly, distinctly and vibrantly.

Helping nature come alive in color

The viewers, made by SeeCoast Manufacturing, have filters produced by EnChroma, a company that manufactures eyewear for colorblindness.

The lenses contain optical filters that remove small slices of light, which help compensate for excessive overlapping in the photopigments in the eye. The filters enhance the vibrancy and saturation of colors, while facilitating color discrimination, depth and perception for people who are colorblind.

For colorblind individuals, some colors are indistinguishable. For example, purple and blue look the same, red appears brown, pink looks gray and green seems brownish or gray.

Numerous state and national parks, including more than a dozen Tennessee state parks, have already offered the EnChroma technology to help enhance colorblind visitors' outdoor sightseeing experiences.

Expanding Michigan's locations

These specially adapted EnChroma lenses now are available at Maybury as well as Ludington State Park in Mason County and Highland Recreation Area in Oakland County. Color blind scenic viewers also have been available at Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park in the Upper Peninsula and William G. Milliken State Park and Harbor in Detroit.

Viewers soon will be added to Muskegon State Park, along Lake Michigan in Muskegon County, and Rifle River Recreation Area in Ogemaw County.

It's because of state park friends groups – like the one McKnight helped launch years ago – that more of these viewers are available to parkgoers around Michigan.

Earlier this fall, Maybury held a ribbon-cutting to celebrate the fundraising success that allowed for the two EnChroma lenses – one overlooking a picturesque meadow dotted with 44 bluebird houses and the second with views of the park's pond and fishing dock.

"This is a nice addition," McKnight said after using the lenses for the first time. "People will be able to see color they've never seen before."

Though it was a cloudy day, preventing him from seeing the colors as vividly as he would during sunny weather, McKnight was pleased with the upgraded view that the EnChroma lenses provided.

"When I looked through, I could see red, which I don't think I would have seen otherwise," he said. "I often don't see the red of leaves. My wife will say, 'There's a tree over there starting to turn red,' and I don't see it. I'm looking forward to going back on a sunny day – the colors will pop a lot."

Inspiration strikes

Joe Wrobel, president of Friends of Maybury State Park, and Barb Krizman, treasurer of the group, recalled learning about EnChroma lenses during an annual Michigan Department of Natural Resources gathering of friends groups.

It was there where they learned a few other state parks were adding these viewers to their list of amenities.

"I didn't realize there are 13 million people in America who have color blindness and that more men than women have it," Wrobel said of hearing speakers share stories about EnChroma lenses and their benefits. "There are people who don't even know they are colorblind, and I found that fascinating."

It was an "a-ha moment" as much as a humbling one, he said.

"I think I take my health for granted too much – you don't realize the extent to which some people have limitations their whole life," he said.

Helping raise funds for these viewfinders was a no-brainer, Wrobel said, adding that this would be another way the park is showing its commitment to accessible outdoor recreation.

Maybury is also a proud participant in the DNR's track chair program, which allows users to explore areas of the parks where traditional wheelchairs might not be able to maneuver as easily.

"That (program) is near and dear to several of us," Wrobel said.

The friends group applied for and received a $2,000 Northville Rotary Foundation grant, and an anonymous donor provided $7,000, Krizman said. Friends of Maybury State Park picked up the difference to purchase and install the two viewers for a total cost of $9,500.

"It was a collaborative effort," Krizman said.

Helping make the outdoors accessible

The specialized viewers for visitors who are colorblind are part of the DNR's goal to expand accessibility, equity and inclusion.

"I first learned about the EnChroma technology at a presentation given by our diversity, equity and inclusion officer and immediately saw its potential to transform how people experience Michigan's natural beauty," said Michelle O'Kelly, chairwoman of the DNR's accessibility team and friends group coordinator. "We introduced the idea to our friends groups, who quickly embraced the vision and helped bring it to life in parks across the state.

"Thanks to their dedication and support, we'll have EnChroma-equipped viewing stations in seven Michigan state parks by the end of the year, with additional locations in the works. I'm deeply grateful to everyone who helped to make this possible."

Sarett Nature Center

Sarett Nature Stewards: 2-4 p.m. each Wednesday. This program is a way to experience Sarett in a whole different way. By being a nature steward you are helping Sarett but you also gain a sense of well-being. Sarett's crew will teach you many different skills such as collecting viable seeds for future planting, how to identify invasive species from native ones, removing invasive plants, and more. For ages 10 and older.

Costa Rica Adventure: 2-3:30 p.m. Nov. 9. Join director Nate Fuller, as he recounts his adventures in Costa Rica with a group of Sarett travelers from September. Please call (269) 927-4832 to register. Members free, non-members $5.

Email info for Get Outdoors to sports@TheHP.com, or call 429-1294 by Wednesday.

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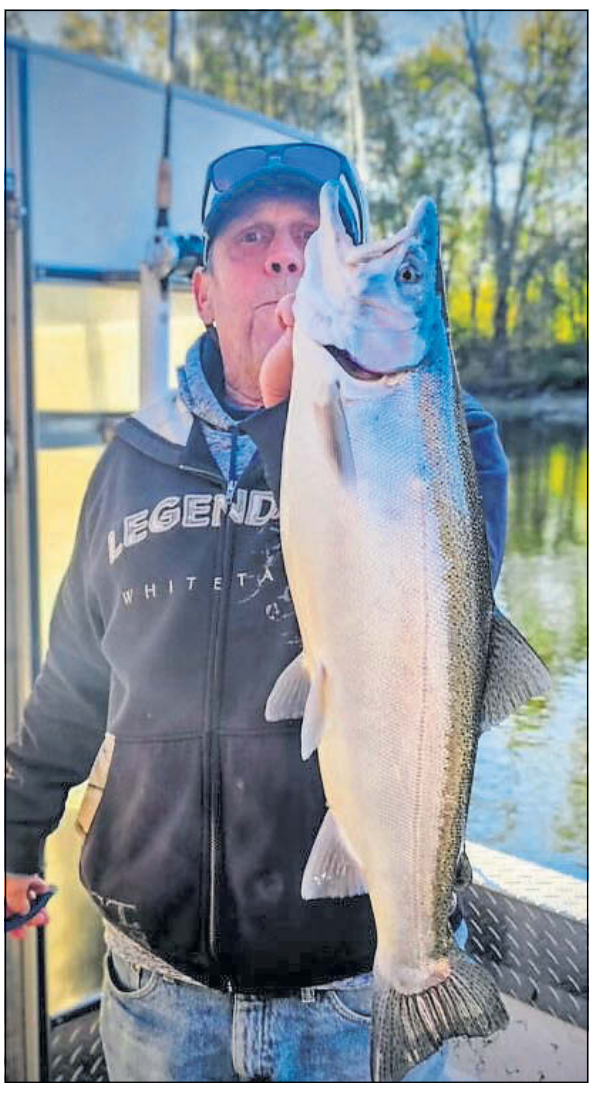

Photo provided

Brothers Steven Ruff (top) of Stevensville and David Ruff of Keeler caught these "husky" steelheads on the lower St. Joseph river on Oct. 29.

Submitting hunting or fishing photos

Have a behemoth buck, a tremendous turkey or supersized salmon? Please submit photos to sports@TheHP.com.

Your photo must be in focus, all persons in the photo must be identified, and the general location of the hunt must be provided (for example, 10-point buck shot in Benton Township, black bear shot near Munising, Mich., etc.)

A nightly spectacle plays out in the marsh with hundreds of bugling birds

By BOB TIMMONS
The Minnesota Star Tribune (TNS)

GRANTSBURG, Wis. — Sandhill cranes came in by the dozens, and then dozens more, to the grassy marsh of Crex Meadows Wildlife Area. They had spent the day feeding in nearby fields and now were arriving in large numbers at a favored roosting spot.

They announced themselves with nasally, bugling bursts, outnumbering about 40 people gathered on the road last Wednesday evening to watch and listen.

"They are so ungainly, so funny-looking, and yet still so beautiful," said Julie Staub, who was there to watch and photograph with her sister, both of Marine on St. Croix, Minn., and avid birders.

As if on the clock, the sandhills arrive daily and increase beginning in early October. Depending on weather, they peak in number at the end of this month or in early November. Then, they'll continue their long journey south to winter after producing a spectacle and sensory experience that still lights up bird lovers. The cranes also are bringing newcomers under their spell.

The nightly ritual at Crex is evidence of a conservation success story that rescued sandhill cranes from near extinction.

Last Wednesday, the spectators stood on an interior road straddling a Crex marsh where the cranes land and sit tight for the night. Some people were with employees from the International Crane Foundation, based in Baraboo, Wis., who were in town to partner with the Crex Meadows Wildlife Area visitor center for a guided tour. It sold out.

The cranes delivered for their audience. As Staub described, they were like marionettes, as if pulled by strings, as they floated in and dropped onto sandy platforms or straight into water.

Larry Hollar of Inver Grove Heights was present with his camera and tripod, part of a now-common routine in fall. He was spending the night in Siren, Wis., so he could get back to Crex before dawn to watch the birds launch.

The retiree likes to introduce new people to Crex, bringing up vanloads of newcomers.

While talking to a visitor about the birds' "gabbling and grace," cranes continued to spread their wings and glide in.

Hollar lit up. "That's it right there. It's great."

All the while the sandhills sounded like a horn section trying to get in tune. The chilly, gusty air carried their calls, one layered on another, or sometimes in unison.

Birds, grasses, water, people – all were tinted in yellows and pinks in the sun's fading light. A crane foundation employee estimated that about 1,500 sandhills had settled in. At first light, they would lift off to feed once again.

'Intelligent, resilient, adaptable'

The cranes stand out for their resilience as much as their cinnamon plumage and red crowns.

The sandhills, native to Wisconsin and Minnesota, were nearly hunted to extinction in both states in the 1800s. Also, wetlands were drained and prairies plowed to use the land for agriculture. By the 1940s, fewer than 50 cranes remained in a bog near Roseau, Minn., according to the Department of Natural Resources.

Habitat restoration and state and federal protections have helped the bird rebound. They're also survivors and considered one of oldest living birds. According to the Audubon Society, fossils of cranes have been found in North America that are 2.5 million years old.

"They're very intelligent and good at figuring out how to be resilient and adaptable," said David Wolfson, a waterfowl researcher who, as part of a University of Minnesota study, tagged cranes and tracked their migration.

The birds that stop over at Crex are part of the eastern population of greater sandhill cranes that breed across the Upper Midwest and widely across Canada. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service counted more than 91,000 in a 2024 survey.

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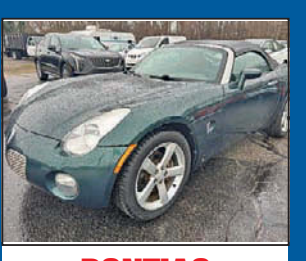

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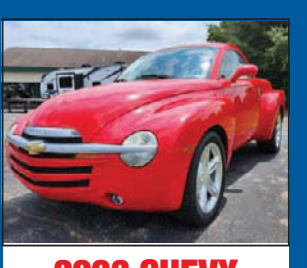

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